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The Great Court of Eton College

FLOREAT ETONA

ANECDOTES AND MEMORIES
OF ETON COLLEGE

BY

RALPH NEVILL

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1911

IN MEMORY
OF
MY DEAR OLD ETON FRIEND
S. S. S.

Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales awake ;
For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take

THE AUTHOR wishes to acknowledge the great debt of gratitude which he owes to those who have assisted him by the loan of books, photographs, and prints.

First and foremost stands the Right Honourable Lewis Harcourt, M.P., who has most kindly afforded him access to his unique collection of Eton books—eventually destined, it is understood, for the school library.

The Earl of Rosebery, K.G., has also shown great good-nature in lending a number of interesting prints, reproductions of which will be found amongst the illustrations.

Especial thanks are due to Mr. Robert John Graham Simmonds, resident agent of the Hawkesyard estate, who took considerable trouble to furnish valuable information concerning the old Eton organ case, a photograph of which, by the courteous permission of the Dominican fathers, was taken in their chapel at Rugeley. The photographs of the old oak panelling formerly in the Eton Chapel were obligingly contributed by

Mrs. Sheridan, in whose entrance hall at Frampton Court, Dorset, this panelling now is.

The author also wishes to thank a number of old Etonians who have furnished him with anecdotes and notes which have proved of much assistance. Chief among these must be mentioned his cousin, the Right Hon. Sir Algernon West, one of the few survivors of "Montem," Mr. Douglas Ainslie, and Mr. Vivian Bulkeley Johnson—some other obligations are acknowledged in the text. His debt to previous books dealing with Eton will be evident; and a number of the coloured plates are reproduced from the scarce work on Public Schools published by Ackermann a little short of a hundred years ago.

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I

EARLY DAYS

AMONGST public schools Eton admittedly occupies a unique position. Every one admires the beauty of its surroundings, whilst to those possessed of imagination—more especially, of course, if they are Etonians—the school and its traditions cannot fail to appeal.

In addition to many of its associations being connected with glorious chapters of English history, the old quadrangle, chapel, and playing fields possess a peculiar charm of their own, due to a feeling that the spirit of past ages still hovers around them. There is, indeed, a real sentimental pleasure in the thought that many of England's greatest men laid the foundations of brilliant and successful careers amidst these venerable and picturesque surroundings. No other school can claim to have sent forth such a cohort of distinguished figures to make their mark in the world; and of this fine pageant of boyhood not a few, without doubt, owed their success to the spirit of manly independence and splendid unconscious

happiness which the genius of the place seems to have the gift of bestowing.

No other school exercises such an attraction over its old boys as Eton, with many of whom the traditions of the place become almost a second religion. "I hate Eton," the writer once heard an individual who had been educated elsewhere frankly say, "for whenever I come across two or three old Etonians, and the subject is mentioned, they can talk of nothing else."

The affection felt for the school is the greatest justification for its existence; an educational institution which can inspire those sent there with a profound and lasting pride and belief in its superiority over all other schools, must of necessity possess some special and fine qualities not to be found elsewhere. The vast majority of boys experience a vague feeling of sentimental regret when the time for leaving arrives—they have a keen sense of the break with a number of old and pleasant associations, soon to become things of the past—the school yard and the venerable old buildings, so lovingly touched by the hand of Time, never seem so attractive as then, whilst the incomparable playing fields, in their summer loveliness, acquire a peculiar and unique charm. As a gifted son of Eton, the late Mr. Mowbray Morris, has so well said, "shaded by their immemorial brotherhood of elms, and kissed by the silver winding river, they will stand undimmed and unforgotten when the memory of many a

more famous, many a more splendid scene has passed away."

For the true Etonian there is no such thing as a final parting from these surroundings, the indefinable charm of which remains in his mind up to the last day of his life. Fitly enough, this love for Eton, handed on from generation to generation, and affecting every kind of disposition and character, has been most happily expressed by a poet who was himself an Etonian—John Moultrie. May his lines continue to be applicable to the old school for many ages to come!

And through thy spacious courts, and o'er thy green
Irriguous meadows, swarming as of old,
A youthful generation still is seen,
Of birth, of mind, of humour manifold :
The grave, the gay, the timid, and the bold,
The noble nursling of the palace hall,
The merchant's offspring, heir to wealth untold,
The pale-eyed youth, whom learning's spells enthrall,
Within thy cloisters meet, and love thee, one and all.

.

The history of the College has been so ably written by Sir Henry Maxwell Lyte, that it would here be superfluous to do more than touch upon a few incidents of special interest.

Henry VI., unlike the warlike Plantagenets from whom he sprang, was essentially of studious disposition, and the foundation of a college—one of his favourite schemes, almost from boyhood—was a project which he at once gratified on reaching years of discretion. In 1441, when nineteen, he granted

the original charter to "The King's College of our Lady of Eton besides Wyndesor."

This ancient constitution remained in force till the year 1869, when a new governing body was introduced, which drew up new statutes two years later. The last Fellow representing the old foundation, as instituted by Henry VI., was the late Bursar, the Rev. W. A. Carter, who died in 1892.

On the completion of the arrangements for the institution of the College, the old parish church, standing in what is now the graveyard of the chapel, was pulled down, and a new edifice of "the hard stone of Kent—the most substantial and the best abiding," begun. Roger Keyes, before Warden of All Souls College, Oxford, was appointed master of the works, receiving a patent of nobility and a grant of arms for his services. At the same time the newly founded College was assigned a coat of arms, three white lilies (typical of the Virgin and of the bright flowers of science) upon a field of sable being combined with the fleur-de-lys of France and the leopard passant of England, to form the design with which Etonians have been familiar for more than four hundred and fifty years.

In 1442 came the first Provost, William of Waynflete, from Winchester, bringing with him, no doubt, some scholars who formed the nucleus of the new foundation. So much on the lines of the College on the banks of the Itchen was Eton founded, though from the first various differences

prevailed—the number of commoners in college (*commensales in collegio*), for instance, was doubled, it being stipulated that they must belong to families entitled to bear arms.

The connection between the two schools was close. An alliance, known as the “*Amicabilis Concordia*,” pledging Eton and Winchester to a mutual defence of each other’s rights and privileges, was instituted—a bond of friendship and amity which has never been broken up to the present day.

The original design of Henry VI. had contemplated a huge nave for the chapel, which would have stretched right down what is now known as Keate’s Lane. This, however, was never completed, William of Waynflete eventually finishing the building with the present ante-chapel, built of Headington stone, for which, it should be added, Bath stone was substituted some thirty-four years ago.

There exists a legend that in the reign of Edward IV. Eton only escaped suppression owing to the intercession of Jane Shore. Though the story seems to rest upon no solid historical foundation, it is curious to note that two portraits of this Royal favourite are preserved in the Provost’s Lodge.

When Henry VII. escorted Philip of Castile “toward the seaside” on his return home in 1505, the two kings passed through Windsor—“all the children of Eaton standing along the barres of the Church yeard.”

Henry VIII. paid a visit to the school in July 1510, and made a monetary donation, as was customary in his day.

The College curriculum at that time seems to have been of a somewhat elementary kind: as late as 1530 no Greek was taught. Great stress was laid upon prayers and devotion, as the following description left to us by William Malim, Headmaster in 1561, shows:—

“They come to schole at vj. of the klok in the mornyng. They say Deus misereatur, with a colecte; at ix. they say De profundis and go to brekefast. Within a quarter of an houre cum ageyne, and tary (till) xj. and then to dyner; at v. to soper, afore an antheme and De profundis.

Two prepositores in every forme, whiche dothe give in a schrowe the absentes namys at any lecture, and shewith when and at what tyme both in the fore none for the tyme past and at v.

Also ij. prepositores in the body of the chirche, ij. in the gwere for spekyng of Laten in the third forme and all other, every one a custos, and in every howse a monytor.

When they goe home, ij. and ij. in order, a monitor to se that they do soe tyll they come at there hostise dore. Also prevy monytores how many the master wylle. Prepositores in the field whan they play, for fyghtyng, rent clothes, blew eyes, or siche like.

Prepositores for yll kept hedys, unwasshid facys, fowle clothes, and sich other. Yff there be iiij. or v. in a howse, monytores for chydyng and for Laten spekyng.

When any dothe come newe, the master dothe inquire fro whens he comyth, what frendys he hathe, whether there be any plage. No man gothe owte off the schole nother home to his frendes without the masteres lycence. Yff there be any dullard, the master gyvith his frends warnyng, and puttyth hym away, that he sclander not the schole.”

Latin plays were acted during the long

winter evenings. Several of these were written by Nicholas Udall (Headmaster, 1534-1541), the author of *Ralph Roister Doister*, the first English comedy.

For almost two hundred years, from 1563, when William Malim resigned (owing, it is said, to his severity having caused some boys to run away), comparatively obscure men held the office of Headmaster, and were overshadowed by Provosts who left their mark upon the school.

Henry VIII. was one day much astonished when informed by Sir Thomas Wyatt that he had discovered a living of a hundred a year which would be more than enough for him. "We have no such thing in England," said the King. "Yes, Sir," replied Sir Thomas, "the Provostship of Eton, where a man has his diet, his lodging, his horse-meat, his servants' wages, his riding charges, and £100 per annum."

During the troublous days of the Reformation Eton appears to have undergone little change; but a number of old Etonians and Fellows went to the stake for Protestantism under Queen Mary.

The names of the Etonians who underwent martyrdom for the reformed faith were JOHN FULLER, who became a scholar of King's in 1527, and was burnt to death on Jesus Green in Cambridge, April 2, 1556; ROBERT GLOVER, scholar of King's in 1533, burnt to death at Coventry on September 20, 1555; LAWRENCE SAUNDERS, scholar of King's in 1538, burnt to death at

Coventry on February 8, 1556; JOHN HULLIER, scholar of King's also, in 1538, burnt to death on Jesus Green, Cambridge, on April 2, 1556. "Their faith was strong unto death and they sealed their belief with their blood."

On the other hand, Dr. Henry Cole, appointed Provost in 1554, behaved in a disgraceful manner. Having advocated the Reformation, he became in Queen Mary's reign a rigid Romanist, and was appointed by her to preach, before the execution of Cranmer, in St. Mary's Church at Oxford. He became Dean of St. Paul's in 1556, and Vicar-General under Cardinal Pole in 1557. Soon after the accession of Elizabeth he was deprived of his Deanery, fined 500 marks, and imprisoned. Whether he was formally deprived of the Provostship, or withdrew silently, does not appear. He died in the Fleet in 1561.

In 1563 and 1570 Queen Elizabeth paid visits to the College, and a memorial of her beneficence is still to be seen on a panel of the College hall.¹

At that time the school seems to have been divided into seven forms; of these the first three were under the Lower Master—an arrangement which was only altered in 1868, when First and Second Forms ceased to exist and a Fourth Form was included as part of what now corresponds to Lower School. It is a curious coincidence that even in those early days Fourth Form during

¹ See Chapter VI.

part of the school hours were under the Lower Master's control.

Their two meals were dinner at eleven and supper at seven, bedtime being at eight. Friday, it is interesting to learn, was set aside as "flogging day."

At a comparatively early period in the history of the school the tendency which within the last forty years abolished the First and Second Forms seems to have been in existence, no First Form figuring in the school list of 1678, in which its place is taken by the Bibler's seat—the Bibler being a boy deputed to read a portion of Scripture in the Hall during dinner.

In Queen Elizabeth's day the *praepostors* or "prepositores," as they were then called, played a great part in the daily round of school life. There were then two of them in every form who noted down absentees and performed other duties such as the *praepostors* of the writer's own day (1879-83) were wont to perform.

Up to quite recent years, it may be added, there was a *praepostor* to every division of the school, the office being taken by each boy in turn, who marked the boys in at school and chapel, collected work from boys staying out, and the like. Now, however, the only division which retains a *praepostor* is the Headmaster's.

Eton was also connected with the Virgin Queen by its Provost, Sir Henry Savile, who had instructed her in Greek. Sir Henry is said to

have been stern in his theory and practice of discipline respecting the scholars. He preferred boys of steady habits and resolute industry to the more showy but more flighty students. He looked on the sprightly wits, as they were termed, with dislike and distrust. According to his judgment, irregularity in study was sure to be accompanied by irregularity in other things. He used to say, "Give me the plodding student. If I would look for wits, I would go to Newgate: there be the wits."

It would seem that at this time the custom of inscribing the names of noblemen at the head of their division—whether they deserved it or not—still flourished. Youthful scions of aristocracy enjoyed many privileges—young Lord Wriothsley, for instance, who was at Eton in 1615, had a page to wait upon him at meals.

Sir Henry Savile died at Eton on February 19, 1621, and was buried in the College Chapel. He was married, but left no family. An amusing anecdote is told of Lady Savile, who, like the wives of other hard-reading men, was jealous of her husband's books. The date of the anecdote is the time when Savile was preparing his great edition of Chrysostom. "This work," we are told, "required such long and close application that Sir Henry's lady thought herself neglected, and coming to him one day into his study, she said, 'Sir Henry, I would I were a book too, and then you would a little more respect me.' To

which one standing by replied, 'You must then be an almanack, madam, that he might change you every year,' which answer, it is added, displeased her, as it is easy to believe."

The next man of note who became Provost was Sir Henry Wotton, who obtained the appointment in place of Lord Bacon, it being feared that the debts of the latter might bring discredit upon the College. Wotton it was who built the still existing Lower School with its quaint pillars.

Izaak Walton speaks of this in the *Compleat Angler* :—" He (Wotton) was a constant cherisher of all those youths in that school, in whom he found either a constant diligence or a genius that prompted them to learning; for whose encouragement he was (besides many other things of necessity and beauty) at the charge of setting up in it two rows of pillars, on which he caused to be choicely drawn the pictures of divers of the most famous Greek and Latin historians, poets and orators; persuading them not to neglect rhetoric, because ' Almighty God hath left mankind affections to be wrought upon.' "

Izaak Walton and Sir Henry loved to fish together, and the spot where the two friends indulged their love of angling is well known. It was about a quarter of a mile below the College at a picturesque bend of the river which, once an ancient fishery, is still known as Black Potts.

Here the late Dr. Hornby had a riverside villa where he spent a good deal of his time.

Sir Henry was a great observer of boyhood, as certain quaint observations of his show :—

“When I mark in children much solitude and silence I like it not, nor anything born before its time, as this must needs be in that sociable and exposed life as they are for the most part. When either alone or in company they sit still without doing of anything, I like it worse. For surely all disposition to idleness and vacancie, even before they grow habits, are dangerous; and there is commonly but little distance in time between doing of nothing and doing of ill.”

He was besides a philosopher sagely writing :—

“The seeing that very place where I sate when a boy, occasioned me to remember those very thoughts of my youth, which then possessed me; sweet thoughts indeed, that promised my growing years numerous pleasures without mixture of cares, and those to be enjoyed when time (which I therefore thought slow-paced) had changed my youth into manhood. But age and experience have taught me that those were but empty hopes. And though my days have been many, and those mixed with more pleasures than the sons of men do usually enjoy, yet I have always found it true, as my Saviour did foretell, ‘*Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.*’ Nevertheless I saw there a succession of boys using the same recreations, and questionless possessed with the same thoughts. Thus one generation succeeds another, both in their lives, recreations, hopes, fears, and deaths.”

During the Provostship of Wotton the tranquillity of Eton life was disturbed by troops being quartered in the town, whilst a number of French hostages had such a bad effect upon the boys, with whom they mingled, and upon the Fellows, whom they introduced to improper characters, that De Foix, the French Ambassador, was entreated to interfere.

Sir Henry Wotton's successor as Provost, Stewart by name, took up arms for King Charles I. at Oxford, his example being followed by a number of loyal Etonians. With the triumph of the Commonwealth came a Roundhead Provost, Francis Rouse by name, who was afterwards Speaker of the Barebones Parliament and one of Cromwell's peers. Eton did not fare badly under the Protector, but the spirit of loyalty to the king nevertheless seems to have continued dominant, and the "Restoration" was welcomed with joy.

Francis Lord Rouse had been buried with great pomp in Lupton's Chapel, banners and escutcheons being set up to commemorate his memory, which is still kept green by the old elms he planted in the playing fields. All such insignia, however, were destroyed when the king had come into his own, and were torn down and thrown away as tokens of "damned baseness and rebellion" by the Royalist Provost and Fellows. In 1767 the irons which had kept these picturesque memorials in place were still to be seen, but all traces of them are now gone; probably they were torn out at the "restoration" of 1846. To us of a later and more impartial age, the insults heaped upon the memory of Provost Rouse seem to have been undeserved, and there certainly appears no justification for his having been called an "illiterate old Jew." On the other hand, the imagination cannot be otherwise than stirred by the name of Provost

Allestree, who had fought for King Charles in the students' troop at Oxford and at the risk of his life conducted a correspondence for Charles II. His services to the Royalist cause would, nevertheless, in all probability not have been repaid had not Rochester introduced him to the frivolous king. Rochester had made a bet that he would find an uglier man than Lauderdale, and having come across Allestree, who was exceedingly unattractive in face, introduced him to Charles in order to win the wager. Charles then recalled the devotion of the individual with whom he was confronted, and with justice and good judgment made him Provost of Eton.

Allestree, though he resided a good deal at Oxford, did his best to set Eton in order, and, amongst other wise and useful acts, built Upper School. Owing, however, to defective construction, or to a fire, this had to be entirely rebuilt by subscription a few years later, when it assumed the form which it still retains.

Provost Allestree found the College in debt and difficulty, and the reputation of the school greatly decayed. He left an unencumbered and flourishing revenue, and restored the fame of Eton as a place of learning to its natural eminence. Besides building Upper School at his own private expense, he also erected the apartments and cloister under it, occupying the whole western side of the great quadrangle. It was at the instance of this Provost, it should be added, that the King passed

a grant under the broad seal that, for the future, five of the seven Fellows should be such as had been educated at Eton School and were Fellows of King's College.

In February 1666, in a coach with four horses—"mighty fine"—Pepys and his wife paid a visit to Windsor. After seeing the Castle, described by the famous diarist as "the most romantique castle that is in the world," they went on to Eton. Here Mrs. Pepys—rather ungallantly, perhaps—was left in the coach, whilst her husband, accompanied by Headmaster Montague, explored the College and drank the College beer, both of which he set down in his diary as being "very good."

By this time the Oppidans had increased to such an extent that they greatly outnumbered the Collegers. In 1614 there seem to have been only forty "Commensalls," as the Oppidans were then called, although the more familiar term had also long been in use; but after the Civil War they ceased to board and lodge with the Collegers (the whole school dined in the College Hall as late as the beginning of the seventeenth century), and gradually grew in number to such an extent that in the school list of 1678, out of 207 boys, no fewer than 129 were Oppidans.

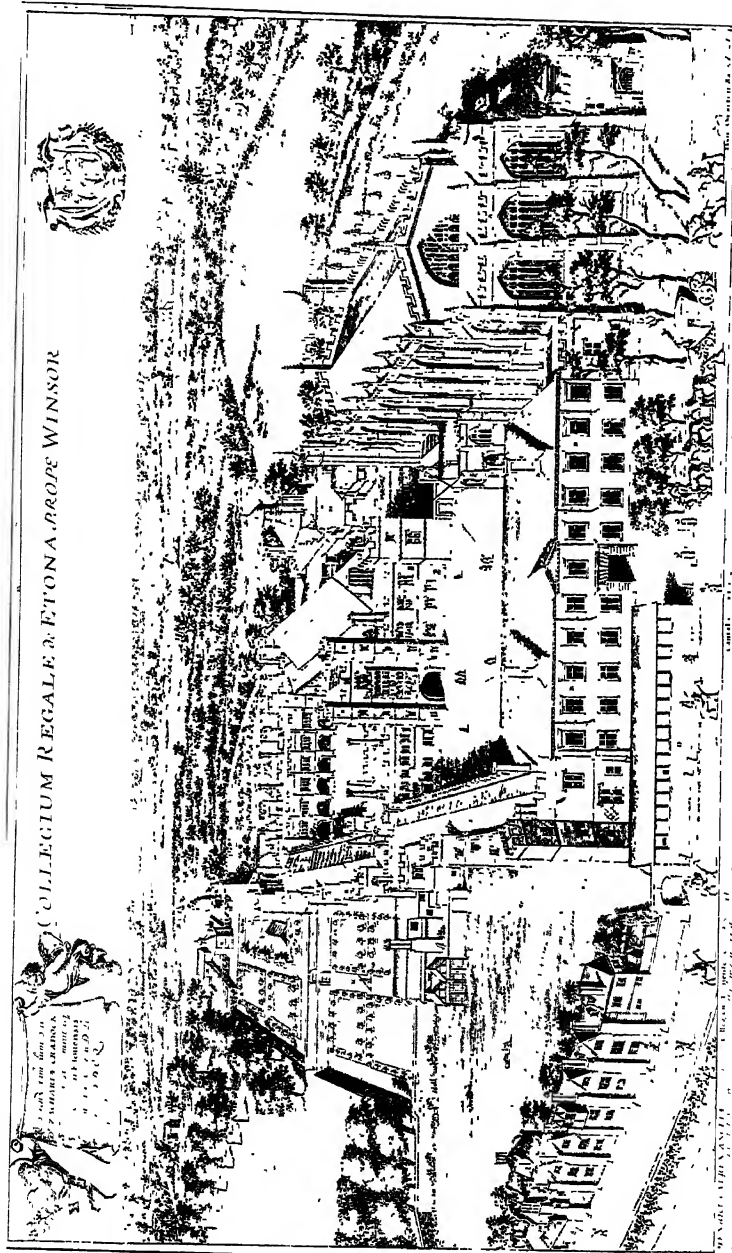
Zachary Cradock, Provost in 1680, it is said, owed his appointment to a sermon on Providence, preached before Charles II., to whom he was chaplain.

The first Headmaster of Eton of whom any satisfactory account has survived, was John Newborough, described as “versed in men as well as in books, and admired and respected by old and young.” Newborough numbered many who afterwards became celebrated amongst his pupils: Sir Robert Walpole and his brother Lord Walpole of Wolterton—ancestors of the present writer—Horace St. John, Townshend, and many other well-known public men, profited by his tuition. Of Sir Robert, Newborough was specially fond, being rightly convinced that he would rise to eminence.

Sir Robert loved Eton, and probably one of the proudest moments of his career was a certain Thursday in Election Week, 1735, when, with a number of other old Etonians, he went with the Duke of Cumberland to hear the speeches in the College Hall, and heard a number of verses recited, the great majority of which were in praise of himself. With Dr. Bland, his old friend, who was then Provost, he appears to have dominated the whole ceremony. So much so was this the case that a dissatisfied Fellow wrote:—

’Tis to be wished that these performances may be lost and forgott that posterity may not see how abandoned this place was to flattery when Dr. B—— was Provost, and when Sir Robert was First Minister.

The Eton authorities, no doubt, were very proud of Sir Robert, the first Etonian Prime Minister, and the first of a long series of eminent



Eton in the Seventeenth Century, by Loggan

Etonians who were to shed lustre upon the school.

School life in the seventeenth century was a totally different thing from what it is to-day; all sorts of queer usages and ideas prevailed. In 1662, for instance, smoking was actually made compulsory for Eton boys. This was during the plague, when, according to one Tom Rogers, all the boys were obliged to “smoak” in the school every morning, and he himself was never whipped so much in his life as he was one morning for not “smoaking.”

As showing the school life of the period the following bill for “extras” is interesting. It was for a boy named Patrick, from April 1687 to March 1688, and bears Newborough’s receipt as Head-master.

Carriage of letters, etc.	£0	2	4
For a bat and ram club	0	0	9
Four pairs of gloves	0	2	0
Eight pairs of shoes	0	16	0
Bookseller’s bill	0	14	2
Cutting his hair eight times	0	2	0
Wormseed, treacle and manna	0	2	8
Mending his clothes	0	2	8
Pair of garters	0	0	3
School fire	0	3	0
Given to the servants	0	12	6
A new frock	0	5	8
	<hr/>		
	£3	4	0
Paid the writing-master half a year, due			
next April 21, '89	1	0	0
	<hr/>		

The “bat and ram club” was used in connection with an extremely barbarous custom of hunting

and killing a ram at election-tide, the poor animal being provided by the College butcher. So popular was this brutal sport, that boys summoned home before the last day of the half wrote beseeching their parents to allow them to remain and see "ye ram " die according to custom.

This ram-baiting appears to have taken its origin from a usage connected with the Manor of Wrotham in Norfolk, given to the College by the founder. At Wrotham Manor during the harvest-home a ram was let loose and given to the tenants if they could catch him.

For many years later the brutal sport continued to flourish, a ram hunt in the playing fields being attended by the Duke of Cumberland on Election Saturday 1730, when he was nine years old. He struck the first blow, and is said to have returned to Windsor "very well pleased."

Our ancestors held curious views as to the education of the young, and seem to have seen no harm in children being familiarised with the grossest forms of cruelty. Nevertheless the ram-hunting, after being modified, disappeared before the close of the eighteenth century. For some years, however, its recollection was maintained by a ram pasty served at election time in the College hall. We may regard the indigestion which must almost certainly have followed upon indulgence in such a dish as a mild form of retribution for the tortures which some of those present had formerly inflicted upon the poor rams.

In the early seventeenth century Shrove Tuesday was also marked by a barbarous usage. On that day no work was done after 8 a.m., and, as in other parts of England, some live bird was tormented. The usual practice was for the College cook to get hold of a young crow and fasten it with a pancake to a door, when the boys would then worry it to death.

Newborough, owing to failing health, resigned his headmastership in 1711 and died the following year. He was succeeded by Dr. Snape, a self-made man, whose mother and afterwards his sister kept the earliest recorded "Dames'" houses at Eton. On his resignation in 1720 the school had reached a total of 400 boys, though some alleged that one of these was a town boy whose name Snape had added to form a round sum.

Under his successor, Dr. Henry Bland, the numbers further increased to 425, one of whom was a boy, always playing upon a cracked flute, who was to be known to posterity as Dr. Arne.

After the South Sea Bubble had wrought widespread ruin the school shrank again to 325. Bland only remained at Eton eight years. Sir Robert Walpole, who never forgot an Etonian school-fellow, presented him with the Deanery of Durham, besides offering him a bishopric, which was declined.

Dr. William George then became Headmaster. He was a very good classical scholar, and some iambs of his so charmed Pope Benedict XIV. that he declared that had the writer been a

Catholic he would have made him a cardinal ; as it was he had a cardinal's cap placed upon the manuscript. Dr. George's reign at Eton came to an end in 1743, when he was elected Provost of King's.

At this period a very curious state of affairs prevailed at Eton in regard to the appointment of the teaching staff. The Headmaster was free to choose his own assistants, whom he paid himself ; but he received numerous fees and presents from each boy under him. On the other hand, the Lower Master—who maintained a sort of preparatory school, to which came boys of very tender age—was able to sell his assistant masterships, like waiterships at a restaurant, as he left the fees and presents to his assistants.

This is shown by a quaint advertisement which appeared in the *London Evening Post* of November 9, 1731 :—

Whereas Mr. Franc. Goode, under-master of Eaton, does hereby signify that there will be at Christmas next, or soon after, two vacancies in his school—viz., as assistants to him and tutors to the young gents : if any two gentlemen of either University (who have commenced the degree of B.A. at least) shall think themselves duly qualified, and are desirous of such an employment, let them enquire of John Potts, Pickleman in Gracious Street, or at Mr. G.'s own house in Eaton College, where they may purchase the same at a reasonable rate, and on conditions fully to their own satisfaction.—F. GOODE. *N.B.*—It was erroneously reported that the last place was disposed of under 40s.

An assistant master, Dr. Cooke, succeeded Dr. George as Headmaster, but managed the school so

badly that his tenure of office only lasted two years, during which time the number of boys decreased, and Eton fell into some disrepute. Cooke was a very unpopular man, dowered with a "gossip's ear and a tatler's pen," and he seems to have possessed most of the worst faults of a schoolmaster and to have made many mistakes; this, however, did not prevent him being given a fellowship when Dr. Sumner, an able and active teacher, was put in his place. The efforts of the latter, however, were able to restore only a modified degree of prosperity to the school, which had fallen out of general favour owing to the misrule of his predecessor. A paragraph in the *Daily Advertiser* of August 11, 1747, shows this :—

King George II. visited the College and School of Eton, when on short notice Master Slater of Bedford, Master Masham of Reading and Master Williams of London spoke each a Latin speech (most probably made by their masters) with which His Majesty seemed exceedingly well pleased, and obtained for them a week's holidays. To the young orators five guineas each had been more acceptable.

In 1754, however, the ancient fame of Eton began to revive owing to the appointment of Dr. Barnard—*magnum et memorabile nomen!* He was made Headmaster through the Townshend and Walpole interests, which were active on his behalf. Under his vigorous rule the school flourished; 522 boys, the highest number known up to that time, being on the list on his promotion to the Provostship in 1756. Barnard had no patience with fop-

peries in boys, and had occasional "difficulties" with the Eton "swells" of his day on the point of dress.

Charles James Fox gave him a good deal of trouble. His absence at Spa for a year sent him back to Eton a regular fop, and a very sound flogging appears to have done him but very little good.

Dr. Barnard also seems rather to have despised any tendency towards fine ways in his pupils. His old pupil, Christopher Anstey, alludes to this in his *Bath Guide*, in a portion of which a critical mother, "Mrs. Danglecub," who has a son at school,

Wonders that parents to Eton should send
Five hundred great boobies their manners to mend,
When the master that's left it (though no one objects
To his care of the boys in all other respects)
Was extremely remiss, for a sensible man,
In never contriving some elegant plan
For improving their persons, and showing them how
To hold up their heads, and to make a good bow,
When they've got such a charming long room for a ball,
Where the scholars might practise, and masters and all;
But, what is much worse, what no parent would chuse—
He burnt all their ruffles and cut off their queues;
So he quitted the school in the utmost disgrace,
And just such another's come into his place.

The "just such another" was Dr. Foster, who proved to be the very opposite of Barnard, and became highly unpopular, in great part owing to the considerable social disadvantage of his being the son of a Windsor tradesman. He was tactless and unfitted for his position, and the school did anything but prosper under his rule; indeed, the numbers

dropped to 250. Meanwhile, the boys got quite out of hand, and several rebellions occurred, amongst them the famous secession of more than half the school—160 boys—to Maidenhead.

One of the ringleaders of the outbreak was Lord Harrington, a boy of much natural spirit. He was foremost amongst those who threw their books into the Thames and marched away. Like the rest of the rebels he took an oath, or rather swore, he would be d——d if ever he returned to school again. When, therefore, he came to London to the old Lord Harrington's and sent up his name, his father would only speak to him at the door, insisting on his immediate return to Eton. "Sir," said the son, "consider I shall be d——d if I do!" "And I," answered the father, "will be d——d if you don't!" "Yes, my Lord," replied the son, "but you will be d——d whether I do or no!"

The revolt seems to have completely broken the Headmaster's spirit; the school fell in numbers to 230, and in 1775 he made way for Dr. Davies, who ruled Eton for twenty years. Unlike his predecessor, Davies was not unpopular with the boys, but unfortunately he could not manage his assistants, with whom he quarrelled, and then attempted to manage the school alone. At that time Eton was largely composed of turbulent spirits, quick to see what glorious opportunities for riot lay at hand, and before long the unfortunate Davies was driven out of Upper School,

pelted with books, and reduced to such a condition of despair that he was obliged to make terms with the other masters, who eventually did succeed in establishing something like order. His subsequent period of rule was more peaceful.

During the middle portion of the eighteenth century a number of still existing Eton institutions flourished, though generally accompanied by quaint usages now obsolete. Referring, for instance, to "Tryals," in 1766, Thomas James, describing the school curriculum, says:—

If Boys gain their Removes with honour, we have a good custom of rewarding each with a *Shilling* (if higher in the school, 2/6d.), which is given them by the Dames and placed to the Father's account.

This custom, though in 1879 it had fallen into complete abeyance, was still more or less extant twenty years earlier; for Mr. Brinsley Richards, in his most interesting recollections of his Eton days, mentions that, having gained promotion in Third Form by handing in three consecutive copies of nonsense verses, in which there was no mistake, the Captain of Lower School claimed an old privilege, and asked that the Lower School might have a "play at four," the question also arising whether the writer of the verses was not entitled to receive 2s. 6d., which he eventually got. As a matter of fact, had the precedents been strictly followed, one shilling would have been the reward.

In the late eighteenth century, the holidays consisted of a month at Christmas, a fortnight at

Easter, and the month of August. Then, as now, the Eton boys enjoyed more half-holidays than were granted at other schools. In 1776, however, the usual curriculum was interrupted by a day of "fasting and penitence" on account of British disasters in America, the colony beyond the seas, which, grown into a great country, has since sent many of her sons to be educated at the old school.

The last Headmaster of the eighteenth century was Dr. Heath. During the early part of his reign he raised the school to 489, but in the last year the numbers had sunk to 357. It was a very lax time, and the boys were allowed to do, and did do, many things which could hardly have been to the taste of a fond parent.

In 1786 seems to have been started the first school magazine—the *Microcosm*, the successors of which have been the *Miniature* (1804), the *Linger* (edited by G. B. Maturin and W. G. Cookesley, for collegers only, 1818), the *College Magazine* (John Moultrie, 1818), the *Etonian* (Praed, 1820), the *Salt Bearer* (1820), the *Eton Miscellany* (1827), the *Oppidan* (1828), the *Eton College Magazine* (1832), the *Kaleidoscope* (1833), the *Eton Bureau* (1842), the *Eton School Magazine* (1848), the *Porticus Etonensis* (1859), the *Eton Observer* (1860), the *Phoenix* (1861), and the still flourishing *Eton College Chronicle* (1863).

At various periods since the last date ephemeral publications have intermittently appeared. These, however, are scarcely of sufficient importance

to require mention, the majority having enjoyed but a very brief existence. The most recent of these journalistic efforts was the *Eton Illustrated Magazine*, two numbers of which made their appearance at the beginning of the present year (1911). Though a third was announced, the magazine came to a premature end, owing, it was said, to the censorship exercised by the authorities. According to an unwritten law, no reference must be made to the Eton Officers' Training Corps, and owing to this and the suppression of skits and humorous paragraphs, it was decided to suspend publication.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century one of the most prominent Etonians was William Windham, in after-life a powerful politician, and "the darling of Norfolk." At school he achieved distinction as a fine scholar, besides being "the best cricketer, the best leaper, swimmer, rower, and skater, the best fencer, the best boxer, the best runner, and the best horseman of his time."

The owner of a splendid estate—Felbrigg Hall—Windham was the beau-ideal of an English gentleman, whose merits were recognised alike by friend and foe.

Heath was succeeded in the headmastership by Dr. Goodall, under whose mild and easy-going rule discipline continued to be lax. Owing, however, to the warm affection and patronage of George III., the school continued to prosper, its numbers rising

under Goodall to 511. Of fine appearance and courteous bearing, he is said to have looked every inch an Eton Headmaster. Devoted to the school where, as a scholar and assistant master, he had passed most of his life, he was an ultra-Conservative in everything which appertained to it; under his rule no changes took place.

Probably this Headmaster never appeared to better advantage when, after the glorious battle of Trafalgar, he publicly called up Horace Nelson, nephew of the immortal admiral, and in a kind and delicate manner informed him of his heroic uncle's death. Though the tears were visible in the boy's eyes, Dr. Goodall's well-chosen words soothed his grief, and there lurked on his countenance a smile of delight at the greatest victory ever gained by this country in any naval engagement over a gallant foe.

"There was a pleasant joyousness in Dr. Goodall," said one of his pupils, "which beamed and overflowed in his face; and it seemed an odd caprice of fortune by which such a jovial spirit was invested with the solemn dignity of a schoolmaster." The blandness and good-nature which made him universally popular both as Headmaster and as Provost, were an element of weakness when he had to cope with the turbulent spirits; and Eton discipline did not improve under his rule. His rich fund of anecdote, sprightly wit, and genial spirit made his society very much sought in days when those pleasant qualifications were highly

valued, and he was a great personal favourite with the king. It was not so much the fault of the individual as of the age, if he had a profound respect for the peerage, and could see few defects of scholarship in his more aristocratic pupils. Those were the days, it must be remembered, when the young peers, sons of peers, and baronets sat in the stalls in the College chapel, visibly elevated above their fellows. Then, too, it was not an uncommon thing for an Eton boy, whose friends were connected with the Court, to hold a commission in the Guards and draw the regular pay. Sometimes, if he obtained an appointment as one of the royal pages, he was gazetted while yet a mere child. "I had the honour this morning," Goodall is reported to have said on one occasion, "of flogging a major in His Majesty's service."

With the death of this courteous pedagogue in 1840 old Eton may be said to have passed away; whilst he lived many alterations and reforms were delayed, no change whatever being made during his term of office as Provost.

Though he has been blamed for not having made some improvement in the lot of the collegers, he appears to have enjoyed great popularity at Eton, and to have been hospitable and benevolent. Glancing through a copy of *Alumni Etonenses*, enriched with a number of manuscript notes, appended by the late Reverend George John Dupuis, Vice-Provost, the writer came upon an enthusiastic tribute to the memory of Dr. Goodall, who is

described as eminent for his talents, his benevolence, and charity. A somewhat touching eulogy, after a description of the old Provost's funeral in the College chapel, concludes, "Farewell, kind and good old man."

II

OLD CUSTOMS AND WAYS

DURING George the Third's reign Eton enjoyed a special share of royal favour. Dr. Goodall, if he had been an easy-going Headmaster, was in many respects an ideal Provost, who notoriously possessed many of the qualifications of a courtier ; whilst Dr. Langford, Lower Master for many years, was such a favourite with the King that the latter used to send for him to come down to Weymouth and preach. The sunshine of royalty in which Etonians basked not unnaturally aroused some jealousy ; and one critic—an old Westminster boy—declared that the vicinity of Windsor Castle was of no benefit to the discipline and good order of Eton School.

A constant patron of boys and masters, George III. hardly ever passed the College without stopping to chat with some of them. He was very fond of stag-hunting, and as one of the favourite places for the deer to be thrown off was between Slough and Langley Broom, he very often came through Eton ; the appearance of the green-tilted cart about nine o'clock was certain evidence that

the King would pass some time before eleven. It became a custom for the boys to wait for him seated on the wall in front of the school. He generally arrived, escorted by his attendants, the master of the hounds, and some of the neighbouring gentry, old Davis, the huntsman, with the stag-hounds, going on before. Occasionally the King's beloved daughter, the Princess Amelia, whose early death he so deeply deplored, came too.

Near the wall, hat in hand, the Eton boys greeted their monarch, who almost invariably stopped to ask various questions of those who had the good fortune to attract his attention. These were mostly some of the young nobility, with whose parents His Majesty was acquainted, and whom, if once introduced to him, his peculiarly retentive memory never allowed him to forget.

Picking out some boy he would jokingly say :

"Well, well, when were you flogged last, eh—eh? Your master is very kind to you all, is he not? Have you had any rebellions lately, eh—eh? Naughty boys, you know, sometimes. Should you not like to have a holiday, if I hear a good character of you, eh—eh? Well, well, we will see about it, but be good boys. Who is to have the Montem this year?"

On being told he would remark :

"Lucky fellow, lucky fellow."

The royal visit was a general topic of conversation during the day, and though one of such frequent

occurrence—nay, almost every week during the hunting season—still was it always attended with delight, and the anticipation of something good to follow. It was highly amusing to hear the various remarks made by some of the boys who happened not to have been present at the time of the royal cavalcade passing, and who, of course, were anxious to hear what had occurred.

“Well, what did old George say? Did he say that he would ask for a holiday for us? By Jove, I hope that he will, for I want to ride Steven’s new chestnut to Egham.”

“You be hanged,” a companion would retort; “I want to go to Langley to see my aunt, who has promised to give me syllabubs, the first ‘*after four*’ that I can go.”

Another perhaps wanted to have a drive to Virginia Water, a favourite excursion with the boys. Such and the like expectations of holiday happiness were as often anticipated, and frequently realised, by the ride of kindly old George III. through the town of Eton.

In a regulation costume of knee-breeches and black silk stockings (any holes in the latter being concealed by ink) the Eton boys going up to the Castle would stroll about the terrace, which, like the river, was “in bounds” though the approaches to it were not. There the King mixed freely with them, asking any one he did not know by sight, “What’s your name? Who’s your tutor? Who’s your dame?” And on



Chen Collegium Corner

From an eighteenth-century print lent by Walter Burns, Esq.

receiving the answer he would generally remark :
“ *Very* good tutor, *very* good dame.”

On the evening of the picturesque “Montem,” the terrace was the scene of what was called “Montem parade,” in which the fantastic costumes of the boys were conspicuous features. On one occasion George III. kept all the boys to supper at the Castle, taking care, however, to forget all about the masters, who were consequently annoyed. The old king more than once interfered to prevent Eton boys from being punished, and actually gave one offender who had been expelled for poaching in the Home Park a commission in the Guards.

William the Fourth also took a great interest in Eton, as did Queen Victoria, who sometimes sent for privileged boys. On one occasion she attended speeches, and all the school considered it a compliment when she invited Dr. Hawtrey to tea. In the earlier portion of her reign, whenever she passed through Eton she was loudly cheered by the Etonians, and would check the speed of her carriage out of consideration for those who ran beside it.

The memory of George III., as every one knows, is still preserved at Eton by the celebration of his birthday—June 4th. What, however, every one does not know is that the present costume of the Eton boys—black jackets and tail coats—is in reality but a sort of perpetual mourning for the old king.

At the end of the eighteenth century the costume of an Etonian consisted of a blue coat, knee breeches, white waistcoat and ruffled shirt, but a few years later white ducks and pantaloons began to be worn by Oppidans, though the Collegers were compelled to adhere to the older dress for some time longer.

After 1820 the smaller boys wore jackets and black slip-knot ties (handkerchiefs they were called at first), the bigger ones swallow-tailed dress-coats and spotless white ties. For a considerable period the latter had no collars, but stiff neckcloths about a yard long, tied twice round. The first boy who started a single tie and collar was one of the master's sons, and at first the innovation was regarded with disfavour as much too free-and-easy. The masters kept a sharp eye upon the boys' tails, any one attempting something like a "morning" coat being at once called to account and told by his tutor not to "dress himself like a bargeman." No objection, however, was made to an indulgence in studs, bunches of charms, and other jewellery; and many boys decorated their coats with summer flowers, in the arrangement of which they showed some taste.

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century morning coats took the place of the swallow-tails. Since then, with the exception of a diminution in the height of the top hat, which in the late fifties of the last century was preposterous, the dress of an Etonian has remained pretty well unchanged,

though, of course, from time to time there have been varying fashions as regards waistcoats. Thirty years ago the most popular of these were those made of a sort of corduroy relieved by coloured silk. At present, I understand, some perturbation has been caused amongst the upper boys by a report that the Headmaster proposes to prohibit every sort of fancy waistcoat; but it is to be hoped that such an interference with Etonian liberty will not be carried into effect.

The custom of swells wearing stick-up collars, instead of the turn-down ones worn by their undistinguished schoolfellows, is now of some antiquity and appears likely to last.

Up to about fifty or sixty years ago Eton boys never wore greatcoats at all. The famous Headmaster, Dr. Keate, was a warm supporter of this Spartan habit, which underwent only gradual modification as time went on; for, even after greatcoats were allowed the boys very seldom wore them, and never by any chance put them on unless they were sure that some of the swells of the school had given them a lead. So strong is the force of custom in this matter, that when a few years ago the Headmaster issued a circular that every boy, no matter his place in the school, was to wear a greatcoat whenever he liked, no notice whatever was taken of it, the old state of affairs continuing to exist. Another curious usage is that which ordains that no boy except a swell may carry his umbrella rolled up, akin to which was the idea,

prevalent thirty years ago, and very likely prevalent to-day, that turning up the bottom of the trousers must not be attempted by any but those occupying a distinguished position in the school.

Before the era of steam, wonderful costumes were worn by Eton boys as they started away for the holidays. On Election Monday the whole road from Barnes Pool Bridge to Weston's Yard would be filled with a crowd of vehicles, whilst round the corner of the Slough Road, where the new schools now stand, just beyond Spier's sock shop, a number of youths, gorgeously dressed in green coats with brass buttons, white breeches, top-boots and spurs, would take horse and ride away to town, much to the admiration of a crowd of lower boys. At Spier's, at the corner opposite the entrance to Weston's Yard, Collegers were in the habit of leaving their gowns when going out of bounds towards Slough. Shelley as an Eton boy was a great frequenter of this sock shop, where the excellent brown bread and butter and a pretty girl, Martha—the Hebe of Spier's—as he called her, made a great impression upon his youthful mind.

Farther away down Datchet Lane on breaking-up day, sporting spirits would find traps of various sorts waiting for them—tandems were occasionally driven by Eton boys during the school-time, fags being taken out to act as tigers on surreptitious drives to Salt Hill or to Marsh's Inn at Maidenhead, once a favourite place of resort on account of the cock-pit there. On one of these outings in a curricule,

a horse bolted, and the driver, brutalized by terror, ordered his fag to jump on the horse's back and saw at his bit. The foolhardy feat was accomplished, and the horse stopped, but the small boy's arms were almost pulled out of their sockets, and one of them got badly dislocated. According to one account it was Mr. Gladstone, then an Eton boy, who tried to rectify the injury before a doctor arrived.

The old Eton traditions were essentially aristocratic in their nature, as was only natural considering that the vast majority of the boys sent to the school were of good birth. Whilst amongst themselves the boys were highly intolerant of all assumptions of superiority not based upon the distinctions of good fellowship and physical prowess, they were rather prone to regard the rest of the world with easy and good-natured contempt; indeed they thought themselves the finest fellows in the world, and little was done by the authorities to dispel such an idea. According to a certain standpoint, this, no doubt, was mere snobbishness, the main object of a favourite form of modern altruism being to assume that the lowest is better than the highest, and give way to everybody no matter who. It is, however, to be hoped that the latter spirit—the spirit of defeat, not of victory—will not be allowed to annihilate that individualism and independence which has ever been held dear by those educated amidst Eton's classic shades. In former days,

no doubt, somewhat extravagant respect was paid to rank; but it must be remembered that the aristocracy were at that time the real leaders of the country, and titles not merely honorary labels purchased by "plebeian money bags," through contributions to their party war chests. For the most part they then carried with them real territorial power.

In its main features, the Eton of our forefathers was a true democracy, though one enclosed in an aristocratic frame. In spite of Socialists and sentimentalists "all men are born unequal," and our ancestors were fully alive to the odious affectation of ignoring social distinctions which always have existed, and always must exist in every society.

The position of noblemen, as they were called (this included the eldest sons of Peers), at Eton, then, somewhat resembled that of the gentlemen commoners at the University. Like the latter, they had to pay for their privileges, double fees being exacted from their parents' pockets. The privileges in question, it should be added, hurt nobody. On the festivals of St. Andrew, St. Patrick, St. David, and, if in the school-time, St. George, the Headmaster entertained Scotch, Irish, Welsh or English boys of high birth at breakfast, and on such days he and the Lower Master wore an appropriate "badge," presented to them by the boy who was highest in rank of the nation which was celebrating its patron saint. Not infrequently

the boy's tutor was presented with one of these badges, sometimes quite valuable gifts, costing five or six pounds apiece. There was no fixed pattern, the design being always left to the boy's own taste, or to that of his parents; care, however, was taken to introduce the shamrock, thistle, or leek, according to the day which was to be celebrated.

The quaint old usage was formerly quite a feature of the school-time during which it took place. As late as 1862 a London newspaper gave an account of its observance. In that year, on St. Patrick's day, Lord Langford, as the highest Irish nobleman who was an Eton boy at the time, presented badges of St. Patrick, beautifully embroidered in silver, to the Headmaster, the Reverend E. Balston, and to the Lower Master, the Reverend W. Carter, both of whom wore these badges throughout the day. On the same date, according to ancient custom, twenty-four noblemen and gentlemen, as they were termed—that is to say, Eton boys—attended a great breakfast given by the Headmaster.

Why such an inoffensive and pretty custom was ever allowed to become obsolete it is difficult to understand.

According to one account, the individual responsible for the discontinuance was the late Duke of Sutherland, who, when it came to the turn of his son, Lord Stafford, to present the badge, discouraged him from carrying out the old usage,

which he branded as mere nonsense. Probably the cost of the badges contributed to the discontinuance of their presentation. It seems a pity that a fixed pattern worth some trifling sum was not adopted in order to prevent extravagance.

Though the badges seem still to have been given up to the middle sixties of the last century, by 1879—amongst the boys at least—all tradition of anything of the sort had died away. One who had been at Eton about 1866 told the writer that he had a vague remembrance of hearing of the custom, but it had then ceased to be observed.

It should be added that Dr. Hawtrey, in his monument in the College Chapel, is represented wearing the badge of Scotland and the motto *Nemo me impune lacessit*.

Till about 1835, noblemen who came to Eton usually brought private tutors with them, and boarded at dames : they were not obliged to have school tutors. The most distinguished of these private tutors would appear to have been John Moultrie, who in 1822 acted in this capacity to Lord Craven, who three years later presented him with the living of Rugby. As a youthful Colleger Moultrie had shown considerable poetic power, and had he died at an early age speculation might have been busy as to the great poems which English literature had lost through his death. His early reputation rested chiefly on "My Brother's Grave," in the style of Byron's "Prisoner of

Chillon," first published in the College Magazine and then in the *Etonian*. Often reprinted since, it is probably the most widely read of his writings. He was a warm lover of Eton, and paid a fine tribute of affection to his old school in an introduction to an edition of Gray. Bringing private tutors to Eton seems to have entailed considerably great cost, for the Duke of Atholl told William Evans that his expenses under this system were £1000 a year! Dr. Hawtrey, it was, who made the rule that every boy should have a school tutor, after which the custom of bringing private tutors practically ceased. Even in the sixties, however, it survived in a modified way. Lord Blandford, Lord Lorne, his brother, Lord Archibald Campbell, and his cousin, Lord Ronald Leveson Gower, all had private tutors—the last three, indeed, lived with one in a house by themselves. George Monckton, afterwards Lord Galway, who was at Eton about the same time, also enjoyed the same dubious advantage.

As has already been mentioned at page 28, up to about 1845, boys who were noblemen, sons of peers or baronets, sat in the stalls (ruthlessly torn down during the so-called "restoration" of 1845-47) at the west end of the chapel, near the Provost and Headmaster; and, according to custom, a newcomer distributed packets of almonds and raisins to his companions in the other seats of honour. Originally, it would seem, this curious usage was limited to the Sixth Form boys, who also followed it when

for the first time they took their places as such. Considerable obscurity, however, surrounds the whole subject of "chapel sock," as it was called; probably it was the continuance of some medieval custom, the meaning of which had disappeared ages before. The eating of almonds and raisins during divine worship seems very strange to those of a later generation; in former times, however, it must be remembered the chapel was sometimes used for other purposes besides the celebration of services. The election of the College Fellows, for instance, took place there, and sometimes some of the electors tucked themselves up as well as they could and went to sleep. The general tone of the school up to about seventy years ago was not very religious, or, it is to be feared, very reverent; there was, indeed, too much chapel and too little devotion.

Two long collegiate services on Sundays and whole holidays, and one on every half-holiday, made the boys tired of the whole thing. New boys sometimes did take prayer-books in with them the first Sunday, but never ventured to defy public opinion to that extent a second time. Some of the Upper School were nearly nineteen years old, but amongst them taking the sacrament was almost unheard of. The chaplain (or "Conduct" as he was called) often misconducted himself by gabbling and skipping—whilst the masters, perched in desks aloft, kept themselves just awake by watching boys whom they "spited." The boys themselves

had their own resources wherewith "to palliate dullness, and give time a shove." Kneeling with head down, as if in deep devotion, many a one of them contrived to carve his initials on his seat without being observed, and very few took the least interest in the service. As for the interminable sermons, those they frankly disliked and despised, the preachers being generally prosy and sometimes incoherent. As a fellow of some originality said in one of his quaint discourses, the hearts of the boys were like gooseberry tarts without sugar, and the vast majority took little trouble to conceal their dislike for chapel during the "restoration," when the school attended service in a temporary building. The forms on which they sat there being somewhat flimsy, every effort was made to smash as many as possible, in order that boys might have an excuse for absenting themselves owing to lack of seats.

Most of the congregation looked upon the enormously lengthy services as so much extra school and took no interest in the responses, for years uttered by an old clerk named Gray, who was an Eton institution dating from 1809. With the lapse of years he had become somewhat deaf, and consequently made occasional blunders which were a constant source of amusement. Especially did his hearers delight in old Gray's performances on certain festivals, such as the service for the queen's accession, when he generally canonized her twice in the same verse of the Psalm. "And blessed be

the name of Her Majesty for ever, and all the earth shall be full of Her Majesty."

On the whole, the service was not conducted in a very reverent or attractive manner, and the impression which it would have seemed to convey was that every one, including the "Conduct," was anxious to get through it as quickly as possible. A great day, however, was Oak Apple day, when the picturesque old service in memory of the Restoration of Charles II. was duly gone through, all the boys sporting oak leaves as a memento of the Merry Monarch of joyous memory. On all other occasions, however, the services proceeded with monotonous and unvarying regularity, which more or less still prevailed in the writer's Eton days thirty years ago, though at that time they had been considerably brightened and no irreverence prevailed.

The chapel bell always stopped five minutes before the hour, but the Provost and Fellows never made their appearance till just as the clock struck; it seemed to be the object of all the bigger boys in the school to come in as nearly as possible at the same time as the College authorities did, yet without running it so fine as to cause a disagreeable rush at the last moment. These loiterers, always the "swells" of the school, took their places just before the entry upon their heels of the Sixth Form boys, who always headed the procession, which was closed by the Provost. His entry was the signal for the commencement of

the service, and the "Conduct" or chaplain whose turn it was at once began. Everything was got through at a pretty good pace, though after about 1840 no slovenliness was to be observed.

From time to time, of course, even in the days when irreverence was common, the boys were moved by some extraordinary service which impressed the most unthinking minds. One of these occasions was the funeral service of a boy named Grieve, son of the English physician to the Czar of Russia, at the commencement of the nineteenth century. On the 5th of November, then a day of much riot at Eton, poor Grieve had filled his pockets with what proved to him the instruments of death, in order to enjoy the frolics of the evening, which were suddenly ended when a young nobleman unluckily "squibbed," as it was called, his unfortunate friend. Some of the fireworks which were in his pocket immediately ignited, which, communicating to the rest their deadly errand, exploded, and literally tore off a portion of flesh from his bones. The poor fellow's screams were dreadful, and he died in four days' time.

This sad affair threw a gloom over the school for a long time, and games and sports were almost forgotten. When the day came for Grieve's burial, its awe was strongly augmented by the solemnity with which the funeral service (that most beautiful and sublime selection of prayers) was read by the headmaster, Dr. Goodall; indeed, among the whole body of upwards of five hundred

boys, not a dry eye was to be seen. One of these has left on record how to his dying day he could never forget the impression made on his mind, when, with a trembling anticipation of the approaching procession, he heard the first words, "I am the resurrection and the life," and his poignant emotion as the funeral procession slowly wound into the chapel and the sky-blue coffin¹ broke upon his sight.

An old Eton Sunday institution was "prose," held in Upper School, where the Headmaster would read a few pithy moral sentences. As a rule it is to be feared these were pearls thrown before swine, and the swine-herd seemed to feel disgusted as he threw them. He then gave out the subjects of exercises for the ensuing week, and informed the boys what would be the amount of holidays in it.

In the old days a number of the Eton masters were not the earnest men who are to be found in the school to-day. At a time when the aristocracy possessed great power, it was not extraordinary that young noblemen should have been treated with a great measure of leniency. A certain tutor, for instance, behaved with great philosophy when one of his pupils, belonging to a great family, rolled him down the hundred steps, and reaped the reward by afterwards rising to a position of high eminence in the Church. Not a few masters

¹ It seems to have been an old custom for boys who died at Eton to be buried thus,

were shackled by hide-bound conservatism, whilst a certain type of eighteenth century pedagogue was quite unfitted to inculcate learning.

Lo ! on a pile of dusty folios thron'd,
Her Janus brows with dog's-ear'd fool's-cap crown'd,
Fenc'd with a footstool, that no step should go
Too rashly near, nor crush her gouty toe,
Obese Tuition sits, and ever drips
An inky slaver from her bloated lips !
Unwholesome vapours round her presence shed,
Dim ev'ry eye, and muddle ev'ry head,
Stunt the young shoots, which smil'd with promise once,
And breathe a deeper dulness on the dunce.

It is not fair to criticise the old Eton masters too severely, but undoubtedly some were incompetent. They were quite content that matters should proceed as they understood they had proceeded in the past, and thought it no part of their duty to attempt improvement in the time-honoured curriculum which for generations had been in vogue at "Eton School."

In the early twenties of the nineteenth century, boys who were mere children, hardly out of petticoats, were sent to Eton in order that they might gradually work their way up and get to King's. Oppidans also were then very young, a child aged four and a half being admitted in 1820. At that time a boy could rise to the top of the school merely by seniority, due importance not being attached to hard work and sound scholarship. The "trials" were then more or less nominal, but the curious thing is, that in spite of all this Eton produced some very fine classical scholars, while

the vast majority of the boys were better acquainted with Latin and Greek than their successors who went to Eton when a more exacting curriculum came into force. In 1827 there were no examinations after the Fifth Form was reached, nor any distinction attainable except that of being sent up "for good," the reward for which then was a sovereign, and every third time, a book.

When a master came across some peculiarly good set of verses he would send them up to the Headmaster "for good"; in due course the writer would be called up by the Head, who would compliment him and read out the lines to the assembled boys in Upper School. A guinea was afterwards given to the boy by his dame. Sending up "for good" seems now on the increase, but in my own school-days one seldom heard of any one achieving such a distinction, whilst sending up "for play" was rarer still. In the past, getting into Sixth Form did not change an Eton boy's life nearly so much as it does to-day. True, he had his seat in the stalls in chapel, and came into church later than any one else except the Provost and Fellows; in Upper School on certain public occasions, he had also the honour of making speeches. Beyond this, however, and the release from shirking the masters, his position was in no wise altered or improved.

Fifty years ago Eton in respect to school work somewhat resembled an oriental state in which the first symptoms of modernisation are beginning

to appear. In the main the old classical traditions commanded a rigid adherence, boys with a totally insufficient knowledge of Greek being by a polite fiction supposed to be able to construe Homer with ease, whilst dunces who could not write a sentence in correct English were every week obliged to show up a copy of Latin verses. The wonder is how all this was ever done at all, but done it was; and, considering the vast ignorance of the majority, who frankly regarded the whole thing with a sort of good-humoured contempt, done fairly well. Perhaps this was in no small degree owing to the fact that in almost every house there was some easy-going clever boy who, having received a good grounding at a private school, was able and ready to help his less gifted schoolfellows.

One of the great features of school work was the execution of a map once every week, illustrating various countries as they were in classical times. Occasionally boys with a turn for drawing would decorate the margins of their maps with some fanciful device. As a rule, the masters extended a good-humoured toleration to this practice, which often bore some reference to current events. At the time when a coming prize-fight was exciting great interest in sporting circles, a boy decorated the top of his map with portraits of the two fistic heroes of the day. This, however, was little appreciated by his master. A more clever form of decoration was the picture

of an eight-oar manned by masters and steered by Dr. Keate which a clever pupil of the Doctor drew in the middle of the Mediterranean with *Gens inimica mihi Tyrrhenum navigat aequor* inscribed beneath the boat. All the maps were shown up on the same day, when "Map Morning," as it was called, filled the school yard.

The old system of sending mere children to Eton lasted up to about half a century ago. In 1857 boys went still there as young as nine or ten, nor was it uncommon to see children of seven or eight in the Lower School. Many stayed at Eton till they were eighteen, after having worked their way up from the First Form to Doctor's Division, at the rate of two removes a year—a process which, including three years' inevitable stoppage in Upper Fifth, required more than ten years to accomplish. In the school list for Election, 1834, Lower School has shrunk to a very small number. The first part of it, Third Form, contains but three boys; the second division, seven. "Sense" and "Nonsense," which come next, have but six between them; there is no one in Second Form, and in First Form only two.

Up to the early 'sixties of the last century, certain divisions of Third Form retained some quaint old titles—the first sections being called Upper Greek, Lower Greek, "Sense" and "Nonsense." Lower Remove, Upper and Lower Remove in the Second Form and First Form completed the tail-

end of the school. "Sense" and "Nonsense," it should be added, received their quaint titles because boys in the latter were doomed to a sort of "poetical purgatory," and only wrote "nonsense" verses; that is, Latin compositions which scanned as verse, but contained no ideas; in which respect the effusions in question resembled the productions of some living bards.

When Mr. John Hawtrey was an Eton master, Lower School, somewhat altering its constitution, became larger again; the boys in it, mostly very young, being all together in his house at the corner of Keate's Lane, where he kept what was practically a private school apart. His boys were not allowed the same amount of liberty as those in other houses: they took breakfast and tea in common, and generally played their games in Mr. Hawtrey's private field. On reaching the Upper School they usually went to other houses.

The curriculum of Lower School was entirely different from that followed by the Upper Forms. In "Nonsense" the boys, besides being taught to write nonsense verses, grappled with intricacies of the old "Eton Latin Grammar." After this they were promoted to "Sense," when the nonsense verses were discarded; Lower Greek and Upper Greek did very elementary work.

After Mr. John Hawtrey had left Eton to set up a preparatory school at Aldin House, Slough, Lower School once more became small. In 1868, just previous to its abolition, it contained

69 boys. The school list had then ceased to give the old terms, Upper Greek, "Sense," and "Nonsense." Shortly after First and Second Forms were abolished and Fourth Form placed under control of the Lower Master, the Reverend Francis Edward Durnford, so well known as "Judy" to several generations of Etonians. Third Form still continued to exist in the writer's day (1879 to 1883); but it then seldom contained more than two or three boys. Since that time it has varied in number, sometimes amounting to ten or a dozen, or, as at present (1911), eight. It is interesting to note that there are now more than sixty assistant masters, as compared with ten in 1834. In the same time the number of boys at Eton has more than doubled.

Up to the end of the nineteenth century there was a glaring inconsistency in various unwritten regulations which ruled the Eton boy out of school. Certain ordinances were seemingly moulded upon an Hibernian model, many things being forbidden in theory though allowed in practice. Up to 1860 everything beyond Barnes Pool Bridge was considered out of bounds, though the river and terrace of Windsor Castle were not. The boys, of course, went up town freely, most of the shops they used being in the High Street beyond the bridge, and so the ridiculous custom of "shirking" grew up. When an Eton boy up town perceived a master he would get behind a lamp-post or rush into a shop, the merest pretext

of concealment from view being, as a rule, sufficient to prevent the "beak" from taking any notice of him, for it was not etiquette for masters to see boys, provided "shirking" was observed. A number of extraordinary usages prevailed in connection with the somewhat senseless custom. For instance, it was not the thing for a master to turn round to look out for a boy following behind—the whole system was ludicrous. One boy, seeing a master enter a confectioner's shop, where he was eating an ice, escaped notice by shutting one eye and holding up the spoon in front of the other!

At one time Sixth Form boys had to be "shirked" like the masters, but this seems to have been very laxly observed, "liberties," that is to say exemptions, being often granted.

Another great inconsistency was that though by the laws of the school, no Eton boy might enter the Christopher, there were very few Etonians who were not thoroughly acquainted with the interior of the old town, where at one time Upper boys had regular dinners which were known to the whole school.

Though "shirking" as a general rule ensured a boy's immunity from punishment when out of bounds, it ceased to exercise its charm at Windsor Fair (abolished about 1871), which was strictly prohibited. Nevertheless, the boys attended it in flocks, part of their amusement consisting in dodging the masters.

It was highly characteristic of the old-fashioned

Eton system, that though the Fair was strictly forbidden, no efforts at all were made to prevent boys from going there, though they were often severely punished if caught. Not a few of the masters, however, almost openly tolerated such transgressions, and a few even made a point of giving their pupils double pocket-money in Fair week. It must be remembered that at that time all the masters were old Etonians, having passed their lives between the school and King's. Consequently they were generally imbued with the old traditions, and had never come across any external influences likely to alter a point of view adopted when they themselves were being trained by masters of an old-fashioned Conservative type.

At the Fair a large quantity of pocket-money was expended at the various booths, the keepers of which, of course, at once recognised an Eton boy, whom all the professional tricksters of the place looked upon as their surest game. Every device was put before him, and all sorts of temptations held out to induce him to stop and have a trial, as they called it, of his luck. Cards, rings, coins, everything in fact was made into an instrument for gaining a little money during this harvest of inexperience.

The rifle gallery, where they gave two shots for a penny, was a favourite resort, and every stall which the boys passed, whatever was the sort of trumpery with which it was filled, formed an excuse for loitering to examine what there was.

Dolls and knives and penny trumpets and rattles, all required attention; boxes and brooches were haggled over, and rings, and even rags, minutely inspected.

The Fair consisted of a number of booths stretching from the Town Hall to Castle Yard. There were the usual shows, and in the eighteenth century a bull bait on Bachelors' Acre, the place of which, in latter years, was taken by roulette. This game, of course, run by doubtful characters, was highly attractive to certain venturesome Etonians—there was real danger in it, for a boy caught playing was turned down to a lower form as well as whipped.

Though many boys were flogged for going to this October festival, it was always a source of great delight to the school, for it gave rise to many jokes.

It was a common practice for boys to purchase all sorts of mechanical toys—jumping frogs and the like—there, and surreptitiously introduce them upon some master's desk. On one occasion, a perfect menagerie was successfully planted on the table before Dr. Hawtrey's very nose, and all the punishment the culprits received for their tomfoolery was his withering remark, "Babies!"

As late as the beginning of the nineteenth century the old Windsor Theatre was often visited by Etonians. The gallery, indeed, seems to have been more or less reserved for their use. By the middle of the century, however, the boys had long ceased to indulge in this amusement, but

up to the late seventies a considerable number frequented Windsor races, at that time an open meeting.

In 1879, the writer's first year at Eton, an idea prevailed that if we could run there and back without missing Absence, such a visit was not forbidden. Be this as it may, the writer, with a friend, did run there and back, the only unpleasant consequence being the loss of some pocket-money. In the following year, besides the notice prohibiting boys from being on the Windsor bank of the river during the races (which, nevertheless, did not prevent a considerable number from crossing over), drastic measures were taken by the authorities to prevent Etonians from going there on foot, which, owing to the vigilance of masters in Windsor, had to be abandoned altogether. It was no unheard-of thing for a boy in those days to run to Ascot races and get back in time for Absence—then at six. This, of course, was contrived by getting lifts on the way, and though some were caught and punished, quite a number indulged in what was to them an exciting adventure. Two or three got to the races by assuming a disguise, whilst others were picked up and hidden in carriages and traps by obliging elder brothers or old Etonians. One boy—Bathurst by name—according to current report, so tickled young Lady Savernake by his impersonation of a nigger-minstrel that she gave him a £5 piece.

In Eton itself up to the 'thirties of the last

century, every Ash Wednesday there was held a Pig Fair, just outside Upper School ; this, of course, led to great disorder—the boys delighting in letting the pigs loose, and chasing them in all directions. At the last of these Fairs in Keate's time, a boy actually rode a pig from the gate of Weston's Yard to the Christopher, at the identical moment when Keate came out of Keate's Lane on the way to chapel, his gown flying in the wind. Keate took little notice of this at the time, merely remarking, "Pigs will squeak, and boys will laugh ; don't do it again."

When Gladstone was a boy at Eton, considerable brutality existed in connection with the Fair. The boys, according to old custom, hustling the drovers and then cutting off the tails of the pigs. Gladstone boldly denounced such cruelty, and gave considerable offence by declaring that the boys who were foremost in this kind of butchery were the first to quake at the consequences of detection. He dared them, if they were proud of their work, to sport the trophies of it in their hats. On the following Ash Wednesday he found three newly amputated pig-tails hung in a bunch on his door, with a paper inscribed :

*"Quisquis amat porcos, porcis amabitur illis ;
Cauda sit exemplum ter repetita tibi."*

Underneath these lines the future Prime Minister wrote a challenge to the pig-torturers, inviting them to come forward and take a receipt for their offering, which he would mark "in good round

hand upon your faces." The pig-baiting, however, continued till Dr. Hawtrey did away with the Fair.

Even in the rough old times the life of the Oppidans was pleasant enough ; a totally different state of affairs prevailing amongst them from that which flourished in Long Chamber, where small collegers were so roughly treated that many of them preferred to be Oppidans till such time as they had attained a place in the school which would guarantee them against being bullied.

Amongst the Oppidans, indeed, there would seem never to have been any bullying at all, whilst their health and comfort was looked after pretty much as it is to-day. Nevertheless, in old days, they had a far greater knowledge of the stern facts of life than is at present the case. Their rambles round the slums of Windsor—visits to the Fair and contact with the rough and undesirable characters of the vicinity—taught them what human nature really is, while the fighting, which was then recognised, precluded all trace of namby-pambyism. In those days Eton sent forth few sentimentalists into the great world, but it undoubtedly furnished England with the very best type of officer to meet the enemy in the Peninsular and at Waterloo. It was an era when the sickening cant of humanitarianism, born of luxury and weakness, had not yet arisen to emasculate and enfeeble the British race.

Fagging at Eton seems never to have degenerated into brutality. In former times, however, fags had to perform many services which sound

strange to modern ears. An Etonian, for instance, who had been fag to the future Wellington, it is said, used to declare that the chief service he had to perform was that of bed-warmer, for the Fifth Form then made the Lower boys lie for a time in their beds to take off the chill. This story, however, is probably legendary, fagging amongst the Oppidans having generally been limited to getting breakfasts from sock shops, taking messages, and cooking. Fag-masters have seldom been anything but considerate, and the old joke of sending a green newcomer (after his first fortnight of immunity from fagging) to Layton's, the confectioner on Windsor Hill, for a pennyworth of pigeon milk, has probably never been put into practice.

As long as a hundred years ago cases of bullying out of College were sternly repressed by the boys themselves. At that time a great sensation was caused because a boy high in the Fifth Form flicked with a wet towel the bare back of his fag, who complained after Absence to the captain of the school. The circumstances soon got wind, and nearly the whole school followed the captain to the bully's dame's, which was Raguineau's. He was pulled out of his room, and most soundly horse-whipped close by one of the large elms, to the delight of all.

Though the accommodation was not uncomfortable, the boys' rooms were then, as a rule, smaller and less luxurious than is the case to-day, the windows being often barred like those of a prison or a

lunatic asylum. The furniture was all of the commonest wood, and consisted of a table, two chairs (well carved by preceding generations), a bureau—a sort of *multum in parvo* for books, clothes, and everything else—and a large press which turned into a bed; this, small boys always regarded with misgiving, it being a practice for raiding parties to shut the occupier up in it.

In 1825 some of the rooms were as small as five feet by six, some were not carpeted, and a few of those on the ground floor were unpleasant owing to the contents of pails descending from the upper windows.

On the fifth of November the Lower boys revenged their wrongs by making a bonfire of their Greek grammars in the school-yard; and later in the year, when the snow came, they would industriously collect it in the house, in order that in the evening they might overwhelm some little fellow and his books with a pile of it.

Very early rising was then the rule, and in winter boys got up by candle-light. The Fourth Form had an infliction called “Long-morning.” They had to be in school by half-past seven, but when the masters overslept themselves there was a “run”—*i.e.* no school. At the beginning of the eighteenth century there was an earlier school still, at six o’clock.

Nicknames have always been popular at Eton, many of them enduring in after-life. Thomas James, who in 1766 wrote an account of the

school, was nicknamed Mordecai and Pasteboard, whilst the three brothers Pott were called Quart, Pint, and Gill.

About the middle of the eighteenth century nicknames both for masters and boys were very common. Certain masters were then called Perny-popax Dampier, Gronkey Graham, Pogy Roberts, Buck Ekins, Bantam Sumner, and Wigblock Prior. The following are some boys' nicknames:—Bacchus Browning (Earl Powis), Square Buckeridge, Tiger Clive, King Cole, Mother and Hoppy Cotes, Damme Duer, Dapper Dubery, Baboon FitzHugh, Chob and Chuff Hunter, Toby Liddell, Squashey Pollard, Codger Praed, Hog Weston, Gobbo Young, and Woglog Calley.

In old days many Eton nicknames were superior, and often elegantly classical. At one time a boy named M'Guire was well known in the school, because, if prizes had been given for knock-knees he would have carried off the first prize anywhere. Homer has a stock of phrases with which he is apt to fill up his verse, just as lawyers use "common forms" for their prose. One of these, frequently occurring in the description of a hero, is *phaidima guia* (beautiful limbs), and Paddy M'Guire bore the appropriate name of "Phaidima Guia."

A peculiarly happy nickname was Lapis Lazuli or Cornelius a lapide, applied to a boy (Newcastle scholar), in after-life well known to Etonians as the Rev. E. D. Stone. He recently contributed some most interesting recollections of Eton to an

attractive book written by Mr. Christopher Stone, his son.

One of the most apt nicknames ever bestowed on any boy was Verd Antique, applied to the eldest of five brothers Green, who were at Eton at the same time—the other four being known as Maximus, Major, Minor, and Minimus.

Slang, though fairly prevalent then, in later years was of a different kind. It would appear that Eton boys did not then say “burry” for “bureau,” nor “brolly” for “umbrella,” whilst “footer” for “football” was unknown. A favourite old Eton colloquialism, “con,” a word equivalent in its meaning to chum and pal, has now long died out, whilst “pec” used for money was about obsolete thirty years ago. “Scug,” an untidy boy, and “scuggish,” bad form, words which were constantly in the mouths of Etonians of two or three generations back, are now, I believe, much less used by Upper boys. “Sock,” a term denoting all kinds of dainties, still exists, but masters are called “ushers” instead of “beaks.” “Gig,” an old piece of Eton slang which comprehended all that was ridiculous, all that was to be laughed at and plagued, has long ceased to be used.

A curious and old-fashioned word once in constant use amongst Eton boys, but now quite obsolete, was “brozier”—this indicated a boy who had spent his pocket-money, and was without means of obtaining “sock.” Brozier was also used in connection with a disconcerting manœuvre some-

times executed by boys at the expense of a dame. When one of these ladies had gained the reputation of not providing sufficient food at the usual meals, and of keeping an ill-stocked larder, an organised attempt would be made to eat her "out of house and home"—as the supply of provisions became exhausted, more would be demanded in the most pointed manner—this was known as "Brozier my dame."

One of these ladies, possessed of great strength of mind and resource, being exposed to a determined attempt of this kind, turned the tide just as her boys—though nearly choked in the moment of victory—were winning the battle. Whispering two words to her maid, the latter disappeared only to return with an enormous cheese, as strong as it was big. This the dame cut away liberally, saying with a smile, that it must not be spared, for there was another bigger one handy. The boys never tried a brozier with her again. This lady had a happy knack of managing her boys, and after getting them flogged relentlessly on slight provocation, would, in spite of themselves, laugh them out of all ill-humour.

The earliest "Tutor's" house on record seems to have been kept by W. H. Roberts, a master who took a few pupils in 1760. When the eighteenth century had got fairly under way, the Oppidans were in all probability distributed amongst "dames" and tutors in much the same way as has prevailed in recent times.

Of late, however, a dame has come to be merely the technical name of a house-master who has no regular "division" or class in the school. They are often mathematical masters, or teachers of special subjects. In old days many ladies used to keep boarding-houses for the boys, which of course gave rise to the name of "dame." Miss Evans, who died in 1906, was the last of these. She was universally respected and beloved, and occupied a unique position in Eton life,—her name will long survive.

One of the most celebrated dames of other days was Miss Angelo, a pretty woman who, it is said, was made an Eton dame owing to the good offices of George the Fourth when Prince of Wales. This lady's pony chaise and fur tippet were familiar to several generations of Etonians, among whom she bore the nickname of the Duchess of Eton. She belonged to the famous family which furnished four generations of fencing-masters to the school.

Old Eton was full of peculiar customs—bad, good, and indifferent. Amongst the latter was the giving of Leaving-Books. Often a popular boy would go away from Eton with quite a fine little library of these, and towards the end of each school-time there was some rivalry and excitement about these collections. Williams' (the bookseller) shop became resplendent at such times, the books being all handsomely bound and mostly gilt, and varying in price from a guinea

upwards. Eventually, however, the gifts became absurdly numerous, and in 1868 the custom was abolished by Dr. Hornby—mainly, I believe, on the score of economy. It might have been better, perhaps, to have limited the price of the books, for these gifts were productive of kindly feelings. The receiver always shook hands with the donor and requested him to write his name in the book, and the collection formed a pleasant remembrance of Eton in after years, and a memorial of friendship with schoolfellows.

Every boy who gave a leaving-book had to be thanked and shaken hands with. And in the last week of the Half boys came and wrote their names in their respective books “after two,” when those leaving Eton were expected to be in their rooms, where various dainties were provided. After the names had been signed there was more shaking of hands.

Another old usage, now very rightly abolished, was “Leaving-Money.” In former days an Oppidan, as he said good-bye to the Headmaster, would leave, in an envelope, a sum, the amount of which depended upon the generosity of his parents.

The recognised method for a boy to present this donation was to hold the envelope inside his hat, which he would place for a moment on the table, and so unostentatiously deposit his offering.

The position of a Headmaster receiving such gifts was rather awkward, and Dr. Hawtrey, a man

of great delicacy and refinement of manner, used to ignore them as far as was possible. At the end of the Summer Half, he would observe, "It's rather warm, I think I'll open the window," and as he did so, the envelope was furtively laid upon the table. When the next boy who was leaving was ushered in, the same process was gone through, except that the Doctor would observe, "Don't you think it's rather cold? I think I'd better shut the window."

A distinctly bad old custom, which prevailed up to quite recent times, was the draining of the "Long Glass" at Tap—that curious Eton institution where the Upper part of the school are still allowed to obtain chops, steaks, bread and cheese, beer and cider. Though the long glass is still preserved, I believe it has not been used for many a long year, a circumstance which can arouse nothing but gratification amongst all sensible people.

At one time there was "Long-Glass" drinking once or twice a week during the Summer Half. Nearly a yard long, and holding a quart, the glass in question somewhat resembles a coach-horn with a bulb instead of an opening at the large end. Aspirants to the honour of draining it attended in an upper room of Tap after two, each with a napkin tied round his neck. The object was to drain the glass without removing it from the lips, and without spilling any of its contents, which was extremely hard, for when the contents of the tubular portion of the glass had been sucked

down, the beer in the globe would remain for a moment as if congealed there ; and if the glass was tilted up a little, and shaken, the beer would give a gurgle and suddenly splutter all over his face and clothes. Only by holding the Long Glass at a certain angle could a catastrophe be avoided.

The results of this rather disgusting practice were often to be clearly discerned on the coats and waistcoats of boys emerging from Tap, and it is to be hoped that, unlike some other old Eton customs which deserve revival, it will remain merely a memory of a more intemperate age.

III

DR. KEATE— FLOGGING AND FIGHTING

AT the end of the eighteenth century the Eton boys had become somewhat difficult to control. Heath and Goodall had both been Headmasters fond of comfort and ease, and in order to keep things from drifting into a state of open disorder, ignored many infractions of discipline. In consequence of this they both enjoyed a fair measure of personal popularity—the parents would seem to have known little about what was going on, for, in spite of the continued deterioration in discipline, the numbers of the school continued to rise.

When Keate became Headmaster in 1809, he found himself confronted by a somewhat difficult situation. A man of unflinching character, he had at first to suffer for the weakness of his predecessors and, owing to his stern methods, incurred unpopularity which it took some time to efface.

No one who had ever come in contact with Keate ever forgot him, for his appearance was exceedingly striking. He was a small man, little more than five feet high, short-necked,

short-legged, thick-set, powerful, and very active, whilst within his small frame was concentrated the pluck of ten battalions. His countenance resembled that of a bull-dog, and he also had something of that animal's mouth. Indeed, it was said in the school that old Keate could pin and hold a bull with his teeth. His iron sway was to many a very unpleasant change, after the long, mild reign of Dr. Goodall, whose temper, character, and conduct corresponded precisely with his name, and under whom Keate had been master of the Lower School. He was at first, there can be little doubt, too severe; discipline, wholesome and necessary in moderation, being carried by him to an excess; on one morning alone he is said to have flogged eighty boys. Flogging, indeed, may be said to have been the head and front, or rather the head and tail, of his system. Like Dr. Busby, the famous Headmaster of Westminster School, he never spoilt the child by sparing the rod. According to Dr. Johnson, Busby used to call that instrument of correction his sieve, and declare that whoever did not pass through it was no boy for him. Keate, although rigid, rough, and despotical, was on the whole not unjust, nor devoid of kindness, a proof of which is that, after twenty-five years, he retired fairly triumphant, applauded and respected by the vast majority of those with whom he had come in contact. During one of the frequent visits which he paid to Eton after his retirement, his grim old face was seen

looking down on the boats in Boveney Lock, whereupon the crews stood up and cheered their old master with a will.

Much has been written of the curious appearance of the famous Headmaster, who has been said to have worn a fancy dress partly resembling the costume of Napoleon and partly that of a widow woman. This was a great exaggeration. It is true he wore a huge cocked hat ; this was not from eccentricity, but because he was a Conservative and respected tradition—it had long been the custom for the Head- and Lower-Masters at Eton to wear such a head-dress, and Keate merely retained it after it had become obsolete with the rest of the world.

As a rule the famous Headmaster wore an angry look, whilst ever ready to explode into a rage, though occasionally flashes of unexpected good-nature would temper his attitude of unwavering severity. This, however, was seldom, his command over his good temper being so complete that he scarcely ever allowed it to appear. On the other hand he could not be put out of humour, being always in the ill-humour which he thought fitting for a Headmaster. He had a fine voice, which he could modulate with great skill ; but he had also the power of quacking like an angry duck, and the latter was his almost invariable way of speaking to boys to inspire respect. His red shaggy eyebrows were so prominent that he habitually used them as arms and hands for the purpose of pointing out any

object towards which he wished to direct attention. The rest of his features were equally striking in their way, and highly characteristic of the man.

Dr. Keate was not devoid of sense of humour. On one occasion when he had set a certain form an essay on "*Temere nil facias*," one boy named Rashleigh failed to send in any work at all. The Doctor, who of all men was the last to be trifled with in such matters, sent for the delinquent, and, glowering with ferocity, demanded the meaning of such conduct. The culprit, however, was quite undismayed and replied, "Sir, you told me yourself not to do it."

"What do you mean?" retorted Keate in tones of thunder.

"Why, sir," replied the boy, "in setting the theme you said, 'Do nothing rashly,' and I have obeyed you." This display of ready wit, it is said, secured the offender's pardon.

When Keate assumed the Headmastership the whole public-school system had remained behind the age, and many of the manners and customs of barbarous times still continued at schools long after home life and manners had become civilised. There is no reason to suppose that Dr. Keate was in any way of a brutal disposition or wanting in natural affections. He had to deal with a very difficult situation, and it is greatly to his credit that he maintained the prestige and increased the numbers of Eton in spite of almost insurmountable difficulties.

When, for instance, it became clear to the boys that the easy-going state of affairs which had prevailed under Dr. Goodall had come to an end, the school was thrown into a state of latent rebellion. One of the first innovations imposed by Keate was to impose an "absence" the evening after what was then known as "long church."

The first time this was put into force the whole school booed the Headmaster as he opened his mouth, and it took him two hours to get through calling the "absence," though various tutors did all they could to help him detect the boys who were the ringleaders of the disorder. After trying to discover the principal culprits and failing, Keate finally determined to punish the last remove of the Upper Fifth and the whole of the Lower Fifth (there was then no Middle Division), whom he considered responsible for the outbreak, by making them attend a five-o'clock "absence." Some ninety boys absented themselves, or rather hid behind the trees in the playing fields where this "absence" was called, and purposely did not answer their names. The situation was grave, and at first it seemed likely that all of these rebels would be expelled; eventually, however, Keate determined to be more lenient and merely announced that he would "flog the lot."

When the first batch came up for punishment in the library a scene of riot took place, and as the first boy knelt down on the block a shower of eggs smashed round Keate; in fact, after three victims

had suffered, the Headmaster's clothes had got into such a state owing to the unsavoury missiles hurled at him, that he had to go home and change. On his return, however, he was seen to be accompanied by a number of assistant masters, and owing to their aid in keeping order he had finished swishing the whole of the ninety boys by eight o'clock that evening.

The masters must have had their work cut out to subdue the insubordination of such turbulent boys. Though the number of these boys was close on 500—later, from 1821 to 1827, it varied between 528 and 612—at no time were there more than nine assistants, including the Lower Master. While some of the forms in the Lower School only had twenty or thirty boys, certain divisions in the Upper School were of quite unwieldy size. In 1820 Dr. Keate's own division had swelled to 198. He then relieved himself by creating the Middle Division of the Fifth, but he continued to keep about 100 boys under his own charge at the end of Upper School, where much disorder prevailed.

All sorts of jokes and tricks were indulged in, and about 1810 it became a regular practice during the Winter Half to try and put out the candles in the two great chandeliers. There had originally been three of these, but according to tradition the third had been broken in the great rebellion some thirty years before. On one occasion a huge stone that was shied at the chandelier went within an inch of Keate's head and cracked the panel behind

him. Having somehow got to know the culprit, Keate let it be known that it was a boy at a certain dame's, at the same time declaring that the only chance the boy had was to give himself up and trust to his leniency; otherwise he would be expelled. The boy was George Dallas, a straightforward fellow. He immediately went to Keate, confessed, and solemnly assured the Doctor that he had never intended to hurt him. Keate said he believed him, but of course Dallas must know that the lightest punishment he deserved was a good flogging, and that flogging he got.

A large part of the boys' time seems to have been spent devising ingenious forms of annoying Keate, who sat enthroned in a spacious elevated desk, enclosed on all sides, like a pew, with two doors, one on each side. One fine morning he entered Upper School, and, going to his desk, tried to open one door, and found it was fastened. He went round, grinning, growling, and snarling, to the other side; the door there had been screwed up too. The desk was up to the breast of a tall man and as high as Keate's head; nevertheless, laying his hand on the top of it, he lightly vaulted in, the feat being saluted with loud cheers and a hearty laugh. This made the Doctor more angry than ever. "I will make some of you suffer," he said, and he did; for the next day, to the general astonishment, he called up all the boys who had been concerned in the screwing up and soundly flogged them.

The secret of this was that Cartland, Keate's servant, suspecting that mischief was afoot, secret-ing himself between the ceiling and roof of Upper School, had witnessed the whole screwing-up process through the rose from which hung a chandelier, and carefully noted down the names of the boys concerned.

Another time a huge mastiff was put under Keate's seat, but the Doctor was fiercer than the dog, which ran away, frightened at his angry gaze.

One of the old school, Keate had no sympathy with innovations. Though he himself is said to have always carried an umbrella in sunshine as well as rain, he could not bear to see a boy with one. "Wet, sir? Don't talk to me of weather, sir," he would say; "you must make the best of it. This isn't a girls' school." By way of paying their Headmaster out for such a remark, a party of boys once made an expedition to the neighbouring village of Upton, took down a large board inscribed in smart gilt letters "Seminary for Young Ladies," and fixed it up over the great west entrance into the school-yard, where it met the Doctor's angry eyes in the morning.

In spite of his stern disposition and rough ways Keate was highly sensitive as to ridicule, and especially disliked attempts to caricature his appearance.

When the informer in the celebrated case of the Cato Street conspirators—an Italian image-man by trade, and a very clever one—made his

appearance at Eton one day with a tray full of plaster busts of the well-known Doctor, cocked hat and all, Keate was very much annoyed to find that his likeness was selling like wildfire amongst the boys. There seemed to be only one way of preventing the wholesale popularisation of his dumpy figure, so, buying up what was left of the Italian's stock, he had the figures taken to his backyard and broken up.

One or two boys had the temerity to personate Keate. Lord Douro, son of the Iron Duke, dressed in an exact copy of the Doctor's robes and hat, actually painted the Headmaster's door red one night, to the amazement of a few persons who saw him.

In some verse commemorating this feat, the watchmen were supposed to be summoned before a conclave of masters the next morning to describe what they had seen :—

“ We both last night
Saw him—the Doctor—in his own cocked-hat,
His bands, his breeches, and his bombasine,
Paint his own door-post red.” Then great the wrath,
And great the marvel of that conclave ; all
Turned their cold eyes on him, their dreaded chief,
Convicted on such damning evidence
Of this irreverend deed.

Keate never discovered the culprit till years after when, as a Canon of Windsor, he was entertaining Lord Douro at dinner. The latter, speaking of Eton days, alluded to the door-painting incident, and was about to make a full confession

when Keate became so red in the face that he thought it wiser to desist.

Lord Abingdon was another Eton boy noted for his mimicry of Keate; indeed, dressed up in a cocked hat and gown made expressly for him, his disguise was so perfect that he actually went round one night and called "Absence" at the different dames' houses without being detected. Years later, after a dinner-party at his home in Oxfordshire, his Lordship would dress up as Keate, and, birch in hand, enact a scene in the "library" for the edification of visitors. On one of these occasions he persuaded one of them to "go down" on a block, made in exact imitation of that at Eton, which stood in the room, whilst two others "held him down," and the story goes that the noble host pitched into his guest with such hearty goodwill that, when allowed to get up, the latter was so sore in more ways than one that he called for his carriage and drove off in a great rage.

Though boys mimicked and laughed at Keate behind his back, very few had the courage to stand up to him face to face. One of the few, however, who did so was Charles Fox Townshend, the founder of "Pop," who, "staying out" on account of indisposition, refused to write out and translate the lessons of the day, in consequence of which he was in due course summoned to the awful presence of the redoubtable Headmaster. In the well-known tones of thunder which made four generations of Etonians tremble, Keate demanded the

meaning of such conduct. "Don't speak so loud, Dr. Keate," replied Townshend, "or you will make my head ache. If I had felt fit to write out and translate the lesson I should have gone into school, but I did not feel well enough, so I stayed out." The famous Headmaster, it is said, was so dumb-founded by the readiness of the delinquent's reply that he let him go without any punishment.

On the whole, Keate does not seem to have been an ill-natured man, for, in spite of his occasional fits of ferocity, he was held in considerable esteem by a large number of the boys. They bore him no ill-will for the floggings he had caused them to undergo, and, when he left Eton in 1834, presented him with a gift testifying their appreciation of his merits. This consisted of a silver reproduction of the Warwick Vase, on the pedestal of which was inscribed—

PRESENTED
BY THE EXISTING MEMBERS OF ETON SCHOOL
TO THE REV. JOHN KEATE, D.D.
ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE HEADMASTERSHIP
JULY 30, 1834,
AS A TESTIMONY OF THE HIGH SENSE THEY ENTERTAIN
OF HIS EXQUISITE TASTE AND ACCURATE SCHOLARSHIP
SO LONG AND SO SUCCESSFULLY DEVOTED
TO THEIR IMPROVEMENT
AND OF THE FIRM YET PARENTAL EXERCISE
OF HIS AUTHORITY
WHICH HAS CONCILIATED THE AFFECTION
WHILE IT HAS COMMANDED THE RESPECT OF
HIS SCHOLARS.

Keate was in Paris soon after Waterloo, and there he met a number of old pupils to whom he

had administered castigations. The latter determined to give their former pedagogue a dinner, which in due course took place at the Restaurant Beauvilliers, then one of the best dining-places in Paris, the hosts being Lord Sunderland, Lord James Stuart, and other scions of the aristocracy. The banquet was a most jovial one, and Keate did full justice to its excellence, drinking every kind of toast, and making a most suitable speech, which appropriately ended with "Floreat Etona." After dinner a good deal of chaff began to fly around the table, and the guest of the evening was told of many Eton happenings which he had never heard before. For the first time he learnt of how two of his masters had secretly contrived to go up to London every Saturday in order to dine with Arnold and Kean at Drury Lane, surreptitious suppers at the "Christopher" were described, whilst tales of tandem expeditions, fights with bargees, and poaching excursions in Windsor Park reached his somewhat astonished ears. The old man, however, took everything in excellent part, merely remarking that all he had heard but inspired him with regrets that he had not flogged the assembled company as much as they appeared to have deserved. On leaving, he thanked his hosts in a few well-turned phrases, and, parting from them on excellent terms, went home amidst loud cheers.

No doubt he owed a good part of the popularity which, in spite of his sternness, he eventually obtained to the attractions of Mrs. Keate, who was a very

fascinating woman. In the year 1814, during a match with Epsom, the Eton champion, John Harding, scored 74—an extraordinary number in those days, when the bowling generally beat the bat. It called forth a poem from a clever Colleger (“Marshal” Stone), in which were the following lines. The Doctor saw them and was vastly amused:—

No vulgar wood was the bat of might
That swung in the grasp of Harding wight ;
No vulgar maker's name it wore,
Nor vulgar was the name it bore.
It was a bat full fair to see,
And it drove the balls right lustily ;
Without a flaw, without a speck,
Smoother as fair Hebe's ivory neck—
It was withal so light, so neat,
The Harding called it—Mrs. Keate.

When the allied sovereigns were present at a fête in the gardens at Frogmore in 1815, the King of Prussia is said to have gone up and kissed Mrs. Keate, making the excuse of her remarkable likeness to his Queen.

All sorts of stories have been told of Keate's fondness for wielding the birch. “Remember, boys,” he is once supposed to have said, “you are to be pure in heart, or I'll flog you till you are.”

He certainly did castigate an enormous number of Etonians, amongst them, it is said, half the Ministers, Secretaries, Bishops, Generals, and Dukes of the earlier portion of the nineteenth century ; but, nevertheless, the boys in his own

division were usually punished by having to write out impositions, and were not flogged except for some very flagrant offence, such as intoxication.

Keate, as Headmaster of Eton, it must be remembered, was chief executioner, and had to do justice when a boy was complained of by any assistant master.

The school had drifted into very slack ways, and Keate, who possessed a very intimate knowledge of Eton, realised that leniency would merely make matters worse. Consequently he rather favoured drastic measures, and in spite of adverse criticism his system had a good effect. It has often been urged that it failed because the boys at times openly defied his authority. In the earlier days of his rule this was occasionally the case, and gross insubordination prevailed, though it never reached such a point as it had attained in the days of Keate's predecessors. On the other hand, when the stern old Headmaster handed over the reins of power to Dr. Hawtrey, the school had become quite orderly and controlled.

Though, as has already been said, not much given to flogging boys under his immediate control, he was a firm believer in the efficacy of the birch for almost every kind of offence, and was quite ready to be a ruthless executioner in order to facilitate the work of his subordinates.

His methods were entirely Napoleonic, and when flogging boys who had committed some unusually heinous offence, by way of making an

impression on their minds as well as their bodies, he used to accompany his infliction of punishment with a number of cutting remarks punctuated by strokes of the birch : "A disgrace to your friends" (swish, swish), "Ruin to your parents" (swish, swish, swish, swish), "You'll come to the gallows at last !" and so forth.

Flogging at Eton was once described by the *Edinburgh Review* as "an operation performed on the naked back by the Headmaster himself, who is always a gentleman, and sometimes a high dignitary of the Church."

The Eton boys of the past took their floggings very lightly. One of them having, it is said, been flogged by the Headmaster by mistake for another boy, though he knew that he had done nothing to deserve his castigation, made no attempt whatever to escape it. When, however, the real culprit was discovered an investigation took place, and the flogged one's tutor then asked, "Why did you not explain to the Headmaster that you had never been complained of?"

"Well, sir," was the reply, "I have been complained of so often that once more or less didn't seem to matter much ; besides, I thought that very likely some master I had forgotten about might have complained of me after all."

Like many others, Fielding, a typical Englishman of a long-past age, was in after life proud of having been flogged. Alluding to Eton in his introduction to the thirteenth book of *Tom Jones*



Headmaster's Room, showing Swishing Block and Birches

he says, "Thee in thy favourite fields, where the limpid, gently rolling Thames washes thy Etonian banks, in early youth I have worshipped. To thee, at thy birchen altar, with true Spartan devotion, I have sacrificed my blood."

In later times, however, a certain number of boys have shown an invincible dislike of being birched, and some have actually preferred to undergo expulsion rather than kneel at the block. The 4th Marquis of Ailesbury (notorious for his follies) when a boy at Eton, having been complained of, ran away in order to avoid a punishment to which he declared he would never submit. This, I believe, happened twice, after which he was at last obliged to confront the Lower Master, who administered a certain number of strokes. On rising from the block, however, the irrepressible culprit made use of such language that his sojourn at Eton was at once cut short. In most cases, however, fear of expulsion has generally made those summoned to the block submit. A peculiar case was that of a boy high up in the school, and a well-known swell at athletics, who, going up to Oxford in order to matriculate, instead of returning to Eton directly the examination was over, outstayed his leave and remained for some days amusing himself with a Christchurch friend. As a consequent result, when he did return the voice of a praepostor was heard inquiring "Is — in this division? He is to stay." The culprit, who considered himself a grown man, at first stoutly declared that nothing

would induce him to undergo a flogging, and it required a good deal of persuasion to make him realise that continued resistance would entail his going away from Eton without a leaving book ; that is to say, practical expulsion, which is liable to injure a boy's prospects in after life. Eventually, concluding that it would be best to submit, he duly paid the required visit to the library, where Dr. Balston officiated in a most sympathetic but efficient manner.

In rougher days, scapegraces used to make a flogging the occasion for all sorts of jokes. One boy, for instance, got a friend who had some knowledge of art to paint a rough portrait of the Headmaster on that portion of his body which has always been associated with the punishment of youth. When the Head was about to deliver his blows he was at first considerably taken aback by being confronted by his own likeness upon such an unconventional background. However, he rose to the occasion, and, with the aid of a couple of birches, completely obliterated all trace of any portrait.

In the case of big boys there is some humiliation in being flogged. A certain captain of the boats, who had indulged too freely in champagne, a very tall and powerful young man, about to be flogged by Dr. Hawtrey, begged hard that he should receive his punishment in private, and thus escape the degradation of being observed on the block by a large crowd of boys looking through the open door.

The Headmaster, however, would not hear of this for a moment, declaring that publicity was the chief part of the punishment.

When Election Saturday was in full swing, a certain number of boys made a point of indulging in insubordination, thinking that so close to the end of the half they would escape punishment. Some of the masters, however, made a point of punishing irregularities at such a time with ruthless determination, and never failed to complain of any boy whom they found to be intoxicated on Election Saturday, with the result that floggings on the Sunday (the boys then went home on the Monday) were not infrequent.

In order to castigate such offenders, Dr. Goodford would be ready in his room on Sunday, where he would sometimes attend at 10.30 at night, in order to flog boys going by an early train next day. Even those leaving Eton altogether had to submit, for otherwise they would have been ranked as being expelled. Mr. Brinsley Richards tells of a boy, nearly six feet high, and with a moustache, who debated in agony of mind whether he would take a swishing on the night before leaving the school. He had actually got a commission in the cavalry; his uniforms were ordered, and he was to join his regiment in ten days; but on Election Saturday night he got uproariously drunk, was seen by a strict master, and put in the bill. He duly surrendered to his fate, received twelve cuts with "two birches," and the following day

took leave of Dr. Goodford on the pleasantest terms possible.

Dr. Goodford seems to have taken a genial view of flogging; on the morning of one St. Andrew's Day he swished a Scotch boy who was coming to breakfast with him, and greeted him later on at that meal with a cheery "Here we are again!"

An amusing story used to be told of a boy just about to leave Eton who, having refused to be flogged, on his arrival at home discovered, to his horror, that his refusal to bow to constituted authority would prevent him from being allowed to enter the career upon which he had set his heart. Hoping to put matters right, he at once set out for Eton, only to find on his arrival there that the Headmaster had gone to Switzerland. The ingenious youth, determined to get flogged, then somehow procured two birches and hurried off to Geneva, only to find that the Head had gone on to Lucerne. To that city he too followed, but, missing the pedagogue whom he sought, again had to continue his pursuit, which eventually ended in the refectory of the Monastery of Mont St. Bernard, where he eventually persuaded the Doctor to administer the sought-for flogging amidst a circle of edified monks. The ordeal over, the Headmaster was presented with the leaving fee, which was then customary, in return handing the relieved youth a leaving book in the shape of a *Guide* to the Alps, which happened to be the only volume procurable.

During the writer's school days at Eton, though flogging was in full swing, the castigations administered by Dr. Hornby—and he speaks from personal experience—were not severe. On the other hand the Lower Master, the Rev. J. L. Joynes, tempered the severity of his floggings according to the offence which they were intended to correct. On one occasion the writer remembers him laying with a will into a boy who is now a distinguished officer. The latter, however, although he received some thirty-two strokes, administered with two birches (the first one after a time became useless owing to the force with which it was used), never flinched in the least, though this “real flogging” must have occasioned considerable pain, very different from the mild sensation produced by the usual ones—often little more than a disagreeable form. At that time the tradition still prevailed that the wielder of the rod whilst “swishing” was not allowed to lift his hand above his shoulder. Though, as far as the writer can remember, this rule was adhered to by the executioner, he has since heard that the sole foundation for the idea was a curious underhand motion of the right arm peculiar to Dr. Hawtrey which his successors seem to have copied.

From time to time more or less public protests have been made against the use of the birch, which has always been an object of detestation in the eyes of sentimentalists and professional humanitarians.

In 1856 a long correspondence appeared in the

Times dealing with the question of flogging. This arose out of the case of a boy named Morgan Thomas, whose father upheld him in not submitting to be flogged.

A report that in future no Upper boys will be flogged, recently called forth some controversy in the newspapers, most old Etonians being, it would appear, of opinion that the abolition of the birch and the substitution of other punishments, including, I believe, caning, are to be deplored. The inevitable sentimentalist, however, was of course well to the front, declaring that "birching, or even caning, is out of date, it being much better to bring boys up to do the right thing and to avoid doing the wrong thing from a sense of honour and pledge." Apparently this gentleman was under the impression that such a method of education was a new and entire innovation !

In future it appears that amongst Upper boys, flogging is to be supplanted by something resembling the painful process once known as a "College hiding." At the time when Oppidan Fourth Form boys used to delight in jeering at Tugs, a good many, being captured by Collegers, were dragged off and given a number of cuts with a cane—a far more painful ordeal, it was said, than an ordinary swishing by the Headmaster.

On the evening of the 12th May 1836 three old Etonians—Lord Waterford, Lord Alford, and Mr. J. H. Jesse, who had been entertaining some boys to dinner at the Christopher after a boat

race against Westminster, being in particularly high spirits, determined to have some fun before driving back to town. Not being able to get into Upper School (where the block was then kept) by the door, Mr. Jesse and Lord Waterford, at considerable risk, crept along the narrow stone ledge over the colonnade, and, entering Upper School by an open window, forced the lock of the door from within, and carried their prize off in triumph, in spite of an attempt to stop them on the part of the College watchman. The trophy, I believe, was never returned, and is still in existence at Curraghmore.

Though the abduction of the block was considered a capital joke, a more serious view was taken of another exploit afterwards perpetrated by Mr. Jesse. During Ascot week of the following year he contrived to wrench the sceptre from the hand of the statue of the founder in School Yard and get away with it. This aroused a very strong feeling of indignation amongst boys as well as masters, and the emblem of sovereignty was, in consequence, soon restored with an apology. This is the only time that the bronze effigy of Henry VI., erected by Provost Godolphin in the early years of the eighteenth century, has ever been molested.

The block in Lower School has also had its adventures. In or about 1863 a King's scholar, Lewis by name, during some disturbance abstracted it—according to tradition to save it from being

destroyed during some disorder. Whatever may have been the truth of the matter, he kept it, and when, a short time later, he obtained a Postmastership at Merton, took it away to Oxford with the rest of his belongings. On his death this block passed into the possession of Dr. Lewis, who lived in Glamorganshire; and when this gentleman died, Mr. F. T. Bircham, obtaining it from his widow, handed it back to the Headmaster of Eton on May 3, 1890.

The venerable, though somewhat gruesome relic in question is of some historical interest, for on it are carved a number of names, amongst them Milman, Lonsdale, Routh, Wellesley, and H. Hall (1773). It is to be hoped that, should Lower boys ever cease to need the discipline of the birch, this relic of sterner days will be kept in Lower School, with the old-world appearance of which it so well accords.

The present block, the one used in the library, was, I believe, abducted some three or four years ago, two boys having carried out the extraordinary feat of climbing into Upper School through a window and smuggling out the awesome relic of torture, which they eventually sent to the authorities of the British Museum, who returned it to the authorities of the school.

An important functionary in connection with Eton castigations has always been the Headmaster's servant, rod-making being one of his traditional functions. Under Keate the office was held by

Cartland, opprobriously nicknamed "Sly" by Collegers, who abhorred him. In Dr. Hawtrey's day came Finmore, who, after the former's death, continued in office as servant to Dr. Goodford. Part of the duties of the office lay in seeing that there were always at least half a dozen new rods in the cupboard of the "library," Dr. Goodford being apt to get very angry if an execution had to be adjourned for want of birches. A dozen new rods were supposed to be at hand in the cupboard every morning, for there was no calculating the number of floggings that might be inflicted in a day. Finmore used to make the rods at his own house, with the help of his wife, and brought them to the library quietly after Lock Up, or in the morning before early school. Sometimes, however, when the supply of rods ran short Finmore had to bring in fresh birches in the middle of the day, which, for several reasons, was a somewhat hazardous task.

One afternoon, after three o'clock school, when there were only three birches available, six boys were up to be flogged. The Head flogged three of the culprits and adjourned the others till six o'clock, at the same time ordering the Sixth Form praepostor to be sure and tell Finmore that the cupboard must be replenished before six. Some Lower boys, however, getting wind of this, and hearing that Finmore was bound to come to the library between four and five, lay in wait for him, and in due course espied him hovering near the top of

Keate's Lane, empty-handed, but walking suspiciously near to a grocer's cart making its way towards Weston's Yard. Suddenly a shout was raised, and the crowd of boys, scampering off, stopped the cart just as it was turning into the yard, surrounded it yelling, and extracted from it six new birches wrapped in a cloth. Finmore, breathless and almost choking with emotion, vainly tried to save his rods. Half a dozen boys, however, soon ran off with one apiece, the unfortunate official being left to bewail his evil fate. In Dr. Hornby's day the custodian of the birches was White, a spruce, neatly-dressed figure whom many old Etonians will still remember.

He it was who, in consideration of a fee of a guinea, saw that the names of boys leaving Eton were cut in Upper School. For a consideration he would also supply birches tied up with blue ribbon to any one desirous of carrying away such grim mementoes.

Whilst the block, for Lower boys at least, remains one of the features of Eton, fighting, once a characteristic institution of the school, has long disappeared, having seemingly fallen out of favour in the late fifties of the last century.

In the period preceding Waterloo the combats were fierce and frequent; there was one nearly every day, and so determined were the Etonians of that era that there is a case on record of two boys rising at six in the morning to begin the conflict, and sparring away for three hours!

Whilst the Oppidans, according to immemorial custom, settled their differences in "Sixpenny Corner," the Collegers fought their battles in Long Chamber. An unwritten code decreed that when a King's scholar wished to fight he must ask permission of the Captain of the school to be allowed to do so after Lock Up, and this, as may be imagined, was never refused. About nine o'clock a fairly spacious ring was formed just below the second fireplace, boys standing on bedsteads placed around, holding candles, which enabled the combatants to see one another. It would appear that in the old fighting days the Collegers fought fewer battles than the Oppidans,—the fights of the former were usually short and sharp, the boys being so well acquainted with each other's strength and powers, that after a round or two the fight was discontinued and the quarrel made up.

The old-fashioned encounters in "Sixpenny Corner," which seem to have been conducted in a more or less formal style, were, of course, most frequent in the days when the Prize Ring occupied a prominent place amongst sports patronised by men of fashion.

Young Corinthians who had only just left school no doubt indoctrinated friends still at Eton with enthusiasm for the knights of the fist, and caused them to regard pugilism as a science worthy of attention.

A curious piece of etiquette in connection with fighting was, that if a Lower boy wanted to fight

one in the Upper School, he could do so only after having obtained leave from the Captain of the school.

At one time Eton battles were fought with hats on, which caused the Westminster boys to declare that, owing to the damage inflicted upon knuckles by the hat brims, most Etonian encounters were not of a serious kind.

The Sixth Form and Upper boys were expected to see that fair-play was enforced, and that when one combatant was clearly overmatched and plainly worsted, a reconciliation took place. Both were made to shake hands, and having vented their ill-feeling in a manly and honourable way, they were afterwards often found to be the best of friends.

A great battle at the beginning of the nineteenth century was the fight between Calthorp and Forster.

“Sixpenny Corner,” at the angle where the wall game now takes place, was the traditional scene of battle, and here the great Duke of Wellington, as little Arthur Wellesley, fought Bobus Smith, brother of Sydney Smith, the fight, according to all accounts, ending in a draw.

A redoubtable pugilist was Stratford de Redcliffe, who emerged victor from many a tough contest. Less successful was Shelley, who is said to have received a severe thrashing from little Sir Thomas Styles. During another fight the youthful poet attracted a good deal of attention by refusing to rest on the knee of his second, preferring

to stride round the ring quoting Homer! No wonder the boys used to call him "mad Shelley"! It must be remembered, however, that he was a constant butt for a large portion of the school. "My belief," said Dr. Hawtrey, "is that what Shelley had to endure at Eton made him a perfect devil."

In the early days of the nineteenth century a gigantic boy named Wyvill became celebrated for his fistic powers. He once gave a Lifeguardsman a severe thrashing in Windsor, and the soldier was so much upset that he went to the Headmaster, Dr. Goodall, to complain of his mauling. The latter, who hated to have to take notice of any Eton escapade, said, "My good fellow, how can you expect me to know what boy it was?" "Boy!" he answered with a country accent; "he is the biggest mun in the tutpens," or two towns. And so Wyvill ever after went by the name of "the biggest mun in the tutpens."

When a challenge had been given and accepted, the details of the forthcoming fight were arranged by friends, after which the combatants just walked into the playing fields with their seconds, stripped off their jackets, and went to work, the boys forming a ring, no other formalities being observed—hardly even a sponge or a watch. When a minute was supposed to have elapsed, one got up from his second's knee and said, "Come on." A little hot blood flowed, and as soon as either felt he had enough he had only to say so. Drawn battles were

not common or popular, boys preferring to have matters brought to an issue. There was the most perfect fair-play, and if things were carried at all too far, interference was pretty sure to be at hand, though not otherwise. When, during a fight, Keate just showed himself at the corner of the playing fields, the hint was immediately taken.

Fights between Lower boys, it should be added, were deemed of small account, but a battle between two well-known Uppers always attracted a large crowd.

The most tragic fight which ever took place at Eton was a fierce battle between a small boy named Ashley Cooper and a big one named Wood (afterwards Sir A. Wood). For three hours the unequal combat was carried on, till, in the last round before Lock Up, the former fell senseless and had to be carried to his tutor's house, where, half an hour later, he expired. His death, however, seems to have been caused by a quantity of brandy given him by his elder brother, rather than by the effects of the fight. Also, had medical attendance been procured, Cooper's life would probably have been saved. After, however, he had been carried senseless to his house, every effort was made to conceal the state in which he was in, gloves being placed upon his hands so that their dreadful condition might not be visible. The boy died the same night.

The sequel of the encounter was a trial at Aylesbury, where, on March 9, 1825, Charles Alexander Wood, seventeen years old, was charged

before Mr. Justice Gazelee with the manslaughter of the Hon. Francis Ashley Cooper, after a quarrel in the Eton playing fields. The fight, it was proved, had been conducted in the strictest accordance with the rules of the Prize Ring, which at that time still flourished. No less than sixty rounds were shown to have been fought with the fiercest determination—the time occupied, two hours. Cooper, who was two years younger than his antagonist, had been given nearly a pint of brandy to enable him to continue the struggle against a more powerful opponent. Wood was, of course, acquitted; besides which, Cooper's brother entirely exonerated him, taking all the blame on himself for having administered the brandy.

This battle—the most serious schoolboy fight which ever took place—probably had some effect in decreasing the popularity of fistic encounters. It certainly created a great sensation, being, according to some, commemorated by an inscription (now illegible) upon the white stone let into the wall at Sixpenny Corner. The late Mr. Brownlow North, Lord Kintore tells me, declared that he had been a second at the fight, and remembered the insertion of the stone as a memorial.

The Gasworks eventually superseded "Sixpenny" as a fistic arena, though the time-honoured phrase, "Will you fight me in 'Sixpenny'?" still remained the recognised form of challenge.

In 1858 fighting was already beginning to go

out of fashion. In 1865, while the Public Schools Commissioners were sitting, they examined a Lower boy touching fights, and asked him if he had any theory to explain why regular stand-up fights had become so rare? The boy answered, "Oh! I suppose it's because the fellows funk each other."

The real reason of the disappearance of fighting was that it came to be thought bad form, and consequently no longer received any patronage from boys who were the swells of the school. Once it began to be considered "scuggish," the fate of Eton pugilism was sealed, and though informal encounters occasionally occur—there was a determined battle near the railway arches in 1893—within the last forty years fighting has become a thing of the past.

IV

“CADS,” AND THE “CHRISTOPHER”

THOUGH a century or so ago fights and floggings were ordinary incidents of school life, a large number of boys contrived to make time pass very pleasantly indeed. At that time the sporting Etonian was quite a recognised type.

The following sketch, from the *Sporting Magazine*, of Etonian ways in 1799, whilst, of course, a somewhat exaggerated caricature, was evidently based upon a very solid substratum of truth:—

Sunday.—Not well—church a bore—headache increased by bell—sent an excuse—up at ten—dressed by eleven—sipped tea in a back room—read half a page of *Sporting Magazine*—d—d good—much pleased with the Oxonian's diary—walked to Castle—prayers with Bluster—rowed the cut of Bluster's coat—bad taylor—smoked a Cockney, and his blue silks—kicked his wig in the kennel—teach the dog good manners—came down to dinner—no appetite—Dame's hash, like shoe-leather—drank wine at the Christopher—bad port—waiter, jawed—shoved him out—during evening church, finished Oxonian diary—tight cock—wish I knew him—drank tea at Coker's—bad company—Spanker and self adjourned to Cloisters—good fun—returned to Dame's—sat with Pink—bad supper—four beer—rowed the maids—picked teeth—went to bed.

Monday.—Waked at eight—keep up pretence of headache—up at ten—dressed by eleven—Smith's burgamot, not so good as usual—breakfast—at one, walked to billiards—no one there—beat the marker.—Mem. Not go to Huddlestons again—came down—dinner better than usual—new cook—dull evening—went to bed early.

Tuesday.—Sham leave—hunted with King's hounds—Stevens's blood lame—d—d bore—forced to ride the grey—new boots—bad leather—cut Webb for the future, and employ Atkins—Alderman S—y, wretched quiz—his chesnut horse broke down—let him fall into a ditch—hat and wig, both lost—looked like a bumble bee in a tar pot—good hunt—hard riding—go along—keep moving.—Mem. Always row the Alderman and not forget to cram Pink—came home tired—sandwiches and wine at the White Hart—merry evening—got drunk—Dame jawed.

Wednesday.—Whole school day—very dull—walked to Steven's—Grey, knocked up—pain in my side—evening, cards, etc.—much better—betting in my favour—beat Dashall at cribbage—won nine shillings—lucky dog—went to bed in good spirits.

Elaborate hoaxes were common at the commencement of the nineteenth century. A young Etonian acquired a good deal of notoriety by sending the town-crier, whom he had fee'd for the purpose, to announce a general illumination in honour of the battle of Vittoria. It created quite a sensation in both Windsor and Eton; and although no one knew from whence the orders came, G.R.'s and coloured lamps in abundance were displayed in the windows of many of the houses. A meeting of the magistrates was hastily summoned, and the hoax was discovered. The writing gave a clue to the culprit, who in due course underwent the punishment usual in such cases.

License which would be inconceivable at the present day prevailed—bull-baiting on Batchelor's Acre and cock-fighting in Bedford's Yard being quite ordinary amusements. Small wonder that at one time strong complaint was made as to the habits of the school. Ascot Races were regularly attended by many of the older boys. Hunting and tandem-driving were not uncommon. Henry Matthews, author of the *Diary of an Invalid*, a very clever and eccentric boy, drove a tandem right through Eton and Windsor; a later rival, however, of Keate's day, when James Clegg of Windsor provided sporting boys with horses and traps, drove one through the school-yard. Billiards continued to be very popular, not only with the boys but with their Masters, who claimed "first turn" at the tables.

Copying the London bucks, Upper boys would sally out on dark nights and wrench bell-pulls and knockers from the dames' houses, or make hay in the poultry-yard of old Pocock, the farmer at the corner of "Cut-throat" Lane, as Datchet Lane was then sometimes called.

Poaching expeditions in Windsor Park were quite common. On one occasion young Lord Baltimore and a companion, when out after game, were pursued by a Master. The young Peer, however, escaped, but eventually gave himself up in order to save his friend (who had refused to divulge his associate's name) from expulsion.

Guns could then be hired for the purpose of

shooting swallows and swifts on the Brocas bank, where a number of sporting "cads," then known as "Private Tutors," assisted in all sorts of spree, providing dogs, fishing-tackle, badgers, ferrets, rats, fighting dogs, horses, and even, it is said, bulls for baiting.

Eighty or ninety years ago a dozen or more of such men were constantly to be seen loitering in front of the College every morning, making their arrangements with their pupils, the Oppidans, for a day's sport, to commence the moment school was over. At one time they used actually to occupy a seat on the low wall in front of the College, but Dr. Keate interfered to expel the assemblage; nevertheless, they continued to carry on their intercourse with the boys, and walked about watching their opportunity for communication.

A number supplied cats for hunts upon the Brocas, while a number organised duck hunts, a duck being put into the river and hunted with considerable brutality. A few, however, escaped by diving and tiring the dogs out.

Some of these men were strange characters, who showed great recklessness when times were bad, and would be ready to let boys have a shot at them at a distance of seventy-five yards or so, three shillings a shot being the accepted price.

Others would jump from the middle of Windsor Bridge for a consideration. The stake-holder on such occasions was usually Jem Powell, known as "Picky" Powell, who about 1824 was celebrated in



Jack Hall, Fisherman of Eton

Print lent by G. Culliford, Esq.

Eton for his "quart of sovereigns," it being his invariable practice when elated—for Jem, needless to say, was no teetotaller—to march up and down in front of his house with a silver-gilt tankard filled with his savings, all in gold.

This Picky Powell would appear to be identical with the individual who, years later, enjoyed a considerable reputation as having been professional bowler to the school. During the annual matches with Harrow at Lord's, Picky usually made a point of having an informal sparring match with a well-known Harrow "cad," Billy Warner by name, who, like his bigger antagonist, was supposed to have been a notable cricketer in his youth. A favourite taunt of Picky's which usually inaugurated hostilities was, "All the good I sees in 'Arrow' is that you can see Eton from it if ye go up into the churchyard."

The last appearance of Powell at Lord's appears to have been in 1858, when, as usual, he croaked defiance at his hereditary foe. On this occasion, however, no sparring was permitted, but Picky reaped a rich harvest of silver, bestowed upon him by old Etonians.

A well-known character of the past on the Brocas was Jack Hall, nicknamed "Foxy Hall," by all accounts the most worthy of Eton "cads," and celebrated as an expert angler. His portrait, taken from an old print, is here reproduced. Others were Joe Cannon, Fish, "Shampo Carter" (who taught swimming in 1824 with the Head-

master's permission), Jack Garraway, and the Anti-Catholic Jim Miller, the patriarch of "cads," who signed a petition against Catholic Emancipation "upon principle." "For," he said, "when the d—d rogues burnt Cranmer and Ridley, they never paid for the fagots—unprincipled varminths!" A great deal of license was accorded to these wall loungers, most of whom were ready to abet the boys in every kind of mischief.

One of the most noted sporting "cads" was old Jimmy Flowers, whose speciality was badger-baiting on the Brocas, his stock-in-trade consisting of a badger in a sack and an old tub with one end knocked out. Dogs used to be put into the tub to fetch the badger out, the charge being sixpence, unless the fight with the badger lasted very long, when Old Jimmy used to exact a further fee. When the fun, if it can be called fun, had lasted long enough, the badger, whose opinion of the proceedings it would have been interesting to have heard, was replaced in the sack, and with a cheery "Good day, gentlemen, your dogs have had good sport," Jimmy would walk away.

Another well-known character in the beginning of the nineteenth century was Old Matty Groves, who was much teased by the boys on account of his rooted antipathy to clergymen, whom he used to denounce as the "black slugs" of the country. He it was who led the procession which every seven years went round to beat the Eton boundary, and nailed up a cross of old iron hoops on a venerable

willow near the grounds of Black Potts, where in after years Dr. Hornby had a retreat. Old Matty was very unconventional in his ways, and had been known in flood-time, when the stream was running strong, to plunge into it in his clothes at Barnes Pool Bridge and swim across to his cottage.

Floods have always been liable to occur at Eton, though, for the most part, they have generally subsided before becoming serious. In 1809, however, there was a tremendous one, which carried away six of the central arches of the old "Fifteen Arch" Bridge on the Slough Road that spans the stream which feeds Fellows' Pond. For five days the only communication with some of the boarding-houses was by boats and carts, and the school had practically a week's holiday. The boys lay in bed till a late hour, and when they got up it was to play cards and get into other mischief. Driving down Eton Street in carts, with the risk of getting spilt into the water, was one of their favourite amusements.

Two subsequent floods have been almost, if not quite, as serious—one in 1852, the year that the Duke of Wellington died, and one in 1894, when all the boys had to be sent home. Many of the Masters, however, remained behind, and spent their time in rescuing people in the surrounding country and supplying them with food.

Though in 1829, owing to the adoption of stern measures, the "Private Tutors" under whose auspices many a boy had shot his first moor-hen

and laid his first eel-pot were expelled from the College precincts, the "sock cads" continued to haunt the "wall" for many years later. The most celebrated of these, of course, was the famous Spankie, who flourished about half a century ago. Spankie never failed to appear in the playing fields during summer, whilst in winter he was more or less of a fixture at the wall. Of him was written, one summer's day when the cricket was getting slow in Upper Club, the line, "Totaque tartiferis Spancheia fervet ahenis." A ridiculous and unfounded school tradition declared that he was a son of a General le Marchant, and he was often playfully apostrophised by that name.

The principal characteristics of this worthy, besides a rubicund countenance, a long blue frock coat, and an old top hat (invariably worn on one side of his head), were extreme oiliness of manner, combined with an unlimited amount of cheek. His wares, chiefly tartlets of all sorts, were contained in a sort of huge tin can supported on legs. At the proper season he also sold pots of flowers.

Spankie was imbued with a tremendous veneration for the aristocracy, and prided himself upon his acquaintance with the history of every noble family in England. Rumour, indeed, declared that most of his time out of sock-selling hours was devoted to studying the *Peerage* and the *Landed Gentry*, both of which works he was supposed to know pretty well by heart. This, no doubt, was a schoolboy exaggeration, but certain it was

that Spankie had a curious and not inaccurate knowledge of the noble houses whose youthful scions furnished him with a comfortable income. It was a way of his to address the sons of distinguished people by their fathers' names, whilst, it should be added, often fleecing them in a merciless manner, for, sad to tell, his methods were not above suspicion. A favourite trick was carefully to array a few very fine strawberries or cherries at the top of a pottle after filling up the lower portion with very inferior fruit; as, however, he made a practice of giving liberal tick, little was ever said about this. He made quite a comfortable fortune out of the Eton boys, as was realised when it became known that he had contributed no less than £50 to the fund for building a new parish church in the High Street.

By the lower members of the school Spankie was looked up to as a perfect oracle, for he seemed to know everything, could predict who would be members of the Eleven or Eight, and tell the name and history of the latest comer, stringing on to it, if necessary, a list of all his relations, with their various achievements. One of this celebrated sock cad's chief peculiarities was that he could scarcely utter three consecutive words without a "sir" coming at the end of them; and it was marvellous how he could change them as easily as he did into "my lord" when any of the young aristocracy came up to him.

In addition to entertaining an unlimited respect

for the British aristocracy, Spankie nurtured a deep contempt for trade, as the small sons of rich manufacturers, especially when they had failed to meet their liabilities, frequently had reason to know. "Good morning, sar," Spankie would say to a scion of some house not unconnected with "cotton," who might be rather backward in settling his debts. "Glad to see you back, sar. Bought some pocket-handkerchiefs at your establishment in the vacation, sar; cheap enough, only six shillings a dozen; but I don't find them wash well, sar."

According to some, Spankie made quite a comfortable little sum by supplying the names of visitors to Eton to the London papers, whilst rumour also declared that on occasion the College authorities employed him to trace and recapture runaways.

One of Spankie's best-known predecessors was a sock cad named Charley Pass, who was to be seen daily stationed at the wall near the gateway with a curious tin apparatus containing pies, kept hot by a charcoal brazier. He had a peculiar cry, somewhat resembling that of the long obsolete pieman. "Ham and Veal; Mutton Eel," he would call out as the boys were emerging from school. Young Collegers who knew his ways would drive him to fury by shouting "and dog—that's what I want." Trotman with his barrow was also a familiar figure in the "forties."

Another sock cad who had some pretensions to

being a rival to Spankie was a hook-nosed little man known as Levi, the Jew. Spankie and he constantly indulged in verbal sparring, in which the Hebrew, who was a man of few words, as a rule got much the worst of it. On one occasion this so infuriated Levi that a battle royal ensued. Goaded to frenzy by some taunt of Spankie's, Levi challenged him to come on, and an animated tussle ensued, speedily ended only by the appearance of one of the Masters, who, separating the combatants, thoroughly frightened both by declaring that he had a good mind to see that the two of them should be prevented from frequenting the neighbourhood of the wall. The idea of this thoroughly cowed even the irrepressible Spankie, and henceforth Levi and he lived at peace.

A less assertive character than either of the two worthies mentioned above was old Brion or Bryant, a white-headed sock cad whose invariable costume was a grey coat. According to current report he had no less than twenty-one children. His speciality lay in purveying small glasses of cherry jam dashed with cream at fourpence, which must have yielded him a good profit.

Bryant outdid the other sock cads in owning a huge barrow, which every day was wheeled to the wall. A portly, good-natured man, he was not as astute as Spankie, and consequently was frequently imposed upon by his young customers. Sometimes, however, he showed a keen aptitude for business. When, for instance, a little boy complained that he

had given him but a small pennyworth of preserve in his jam-bun, he would evince the amiability of his intentions by saying, "I was afraid it might disagree with you, sir."

Another well-known character in the sixties of the last century was an old lady known as "Missis," who sat by the entrance to the school-yard selling apples, nuts, bullfinches, and dormice.

During more recent years there have been no sock cads of such marked individuality as those mentioned above, nor do they enjoy the privileges which were accorded to their predecessors of a more easy-going age, their appearance at the wall being discouraged. Some, however, still ply their trade in the playing fields and at the bathing-places. The most original of the modern school was "Hoppie." Every portion of this worthy's costume, according to his own account, had belonged to some prominent old Etonian. During the summer half he was a constant frequenter of "Upper Hope," where perhaps he still parades "the Duke of Wellington's coat" and "Lord Roberts' trousers" as of yore.

Thirty years ago there were several individuals known as "Jobey"—a name taken from almost the last of the old Eton characters, "Jobey Joel," who died not very long ago. He remembered the school when far more latitude was allowed the boys, and had many a queer tale to tell of that vanished institution, the Christopher, now but a fading memory in the minds of a few.

The ancient hostelry in question would seem to have flourished as long ago as the sixteenth century. The mention of a certain Nicholas Williams lodging "ad signum Christoferi" occurs in the Eton Audit Book for 1523. The old inn served as a refuge to the "ever memorable" Eton Fellow, John Hales, who for his unwavering allegiance to the King was deprived of his fellowship.

In later days the Christopher became a great social centre of local life. All the coaches stopped at its door, and before Dr. Hawtrey abolished the Eton Market there was a weekly ordinary for farmers, and occasionally a hunt dinner, with noise enough to have driven the Muses back to Greece. Its rooms were in great request with parents come down to see their promising or unpromising offspring, whilst old Etonians revisiting Eton made the old place their headquarters as a matter of course.

"Lord! how great I used to think anybody just landed at the Christopher!" wrote Horace Walpole when he returned to his old school in 1746. The place recalled many memories of boyhood to his mind, and he declared that he felt "just like Noah, with all sorts of queer feels about him."

Horace Walpole had passed some happy days at Eton, where one of his greatest friends was the studious and quiet Gray, who read Virgil for amusement out of school. The writer of the famous letters had a great affection for Eton, and Cambridge, as he said, seemed a wilderness to him as

compared with the "dear scene" he had left. In after life the recollection of his school-days was ever keen. When, for instance, he first saw a balloon he declared that he was at once reminded of an Eton football. Though fond of reading, like many other Eton boys, the writer of the famous letters showed little enthusiasm for the school work.

"I remember," says he, "when I was at Eton, and Mr. Bland had set me on an extraordinary task, I used sometimes to pique myself upon not getting it, because it was not immediately my school business. What! learn more than I was absolutely forced to learn! I felt the weight of learning that, for I was a blockhead, and pushed above my parts."

Spending much of his time in the playing fields musing, he retained the recollection all his life.

"No old maid's gown," said he, "though it had been tormented into all the fashions from King James to King George, ever underwent so many transformations as these poor plains have in my idea. At first I was contented with tending a visionary flock and sighing some pastoral name to the echo of the cascade under the bridge. As I got further into Virgil and Clelia, I found myself transported from Arcadia to the garden of Italy; and saw Windsor Castle in no other view than the Capitoli immobile saxum."

In Horace Walpole's day Kendall, himself an old Etonian, presided over the Christopher. Later came Garraway and Jack Knight.

The rattling of coach wheels over the cobblestones outside the old inn was a never-failing source of excitement and interest to the boys. Most of them knew the drivers, whom they delighted to hail with volleys of chaff.

A famous Eton stage coachman was Jack Bowes of the "Original," which started from the Bolt in Tun, Fleet Street, and called at Hatchett's in Piccadilly. Often on his arrival at the Christopher, Bowes would be welcomed with a brisk fusillade fired by boys from pea-shooters. He had been a soldier and seen a good deal of service, and was a most popular character with all sorts of people, and especially with the relatives and fathers of Eton boys; for, like Moody, another Eton coachman, Bowes knew all that there was to be known about the College and its ways. He was a kindly man, and reassured many a small boy fresh from home and nervous as to the ordeal awaiting him when he reached the great public school. One idea which not a few new boys had firmly implanted upon their minds was that by way of initiation into the privilege of becoming an Etonian they would be pitched off Windsor Bridge and made to struggle for their life. There was, of course, not the slightest foundation for such an idea, which no doubt arose because in former days it was no very uncommon thing for Etonians, anxious to show their powers as swimmers, to take a header from the Bridge into the Thames beneath. Many indeed were experts at such feats.

Less kindly than Bowes were some of the hangers-on who gained a livelihood by lounging about the White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly, which was always a great rendezvous for all sorts of queer characters, itinerant orange-vendors and others,

who flocked round the coaches hoping to make a more or less honest penny. Amongst these was one well-known individual who gained a livelihood by doing odd jobs in the way of carrying parcels and helping with luggage. He was especially active on days when the Eton boys were returning to school, and as he took some little fellow's trunk to hoist it on to the coach would cheerfully impart the information that "he had never seen such a fine load of birch as had gone down the day before."

"Bishop"—a particular kind of punch—and Bulstrode ale were the two beverages for which the Christopher was famous. Garraway brought the latter into fashion, and a huge amount of it was drunk, and though Garraway had only purchased a small stock of this famous old ale at the sale at Bulstrode, by some miraculous process it continued to be served out in plentiful quantities ever after. This became a standing joke against mine host of the Christopher, who afterwards made a speciality of an excellent tap, which he called the Queen's, from some he had purchased at Windsor. This was sold in small quarts, at a shilling per jug.

The old place was often quite full of undergraduates, young officers, and bucks come down to take a look at the school they had so recently left, and some of these young men, especially those from Oxford (where formerly so many Etonians went on account of its being the headquarters of classical learning) formed what was known as the

"Oppidans' Club." The main object of this convivial association, which met in one of the cellars, next to consuming large quantities of port, was to sally out after nightfall and abduct the shops' signs—barbers' poles and other insignia of trade—from the houses in the High Street, afterwards bearing them back to the Christopher in triumph. The tradesmen bore these eccentricities with considerable fortitude, for in the end they were pretty sure not to suffer.

Representations to the masters and authorities were scarcely necessary to redress such whimsical grievances, the injured parties being well aware that they would receive due compensation. The next day the spoils and trophies were arranged in due form in the cellar at the old inn, which became well known by the name of "Oppidan's Museum." Here the merry wags were to be found in council, holding a court of claims, to which all the shopkeepers who had suffered any loss were successively summoned; and after pointing out from among the motley collection the article they claimed, and the price it originally cost, they were handsomely remunerated or the sign replaced. The good people of Eton generally chose the former, as it not only enabled them to sport a new sign, but to put a little profit upon the cost price of the old one. The trophies thus acquired were then packed up in hampers and despatched to Oxford, where they were on similar occasions not infrequently displayed or hung up in lieu of some well-known

sign, such as the Mitre, etc., which had been removed during the night.

Some Collegers once played a joke of this sort on Dr. Keate. A Windsor hatter, Jones by name, had outside his shop an immense tin three-cornered cocked hat as a sign, the exact counterpart, except much larger, of the one Keate wore. This was stolen one winter's evening by a detachment of Collegers; they managed to send it to London, and thence, carefully packed, it was forwarded to Keate. Meanwhile, a letter was sent to Jones saying that the writer could give him some inkling of who was the thief, for that Dr. Keate had long been observed to eye this magnificent cocked hat with longing envy, and there was no doubt if a search warrant was procured, it would be found in the house of the Headmaster.

The cellar in which met the so-called "Oppidans' Club" was known as "the Estaminet." The usual fare here was bread and cheese, beer and porter, and in its general features it seems to have been the precursor of the present Tap. Lower boys had no share in its amenities. On occasion, however, stronger potations were indulged in, and of course this was more especially the case when old Etonians from the Universities were paying a visit to their old school.

No doubt, these visitors had rather a demoralising effect upon the boys who stood by in admiration, envying the bucks who lounged over the rails of the gallery and indulged in chaff with those



THE OPPIAN'S MUSEUM or *Don Court of Charms at the Christopher.*

From a coloured print in the possession of the Rt. Honble. Lords Harcourt, M.P.

below, whilst they ogled any pretty girl who might chance to meet their roving glance, or chaffed any mischievous Etonians who hung about the old yard, occasionally pulling the bungs out of the casks which were ranged there.

In the old Christopher the assistant masters at one time had a room reserved for them in which they were wont to meet, whilst regular convivial assemblies were sometimes organised there by Eton boys, one of the chief being on St. Andrew's Day, when Colleger had met Oppidan at the wall.

In its last years, when the famous hostelry began to be regarded as a great moral danger by the authorities, they began to make determined efforts to prevent boys from being within its doors, and one St. Andrew's Day a raid was suddenly made. Just as the revelry had reached its height, Smut, otherwise known as Beelzebub, the head waiter, announced the appearance of a party of masters. Great confusion ensued, and as an ominous creaking of boots was heard on the staircase, the landlord's daughter turned off the gas, and all was left in darkness. A stentorian voice was heard crying, "I require the landlord of this house to provide me with a light." Meanwhile, one of the masters groped his way to the door of the banqueting-room and held it so that no one could pass. One of the raiding party, a master named Goodford, who afterwards became "Head," greatly distinguished himself by embracing Smut, whom in the darkness he mistook for a boy trying to make

his escape. However, he was rudely undeceived by a gruff voice grunting out, "Come, none of this nonsense!" At length a light was procured, and as the boys filed out, one by one, their names were entered in a "black list."

The curious thing is that little organised effort seems ever to have been made to prevent boys from being allowed to enter the old inn; raiding them when within its walls naturally did little good; in fact, it merely stimulated the spirit of adventure and made them go there more. A cousin of the writer—well-known as master of the West Kent foxhounds—describing Eton life under Hawtrey, could not help speaking with glee of how he and a companion were the only boys out of twenty who managed to escape during one of these raids, the perilous method adopted having been to climb down a waterpipe and then drop into the yard at the back.

The Christopher finally ended its career as a hostelry in 1842, owing to the Crown giving up the lease to the College. Its abolition had been constantly urged ever since Dr. Hawtrey had become Headmaster. A violent foe to the old inn and its enemy, he branded it as the greatest evil in Eton life, and after it had been numbered with things of the past he was so pleased that, as a sort of thank-offering, he wanted it to be pulled down and a chapel of ease erected on the site. This scheme, however, was not carried out, St. John's Church being built in the High Street instead and the

Christopher turned into a boarding-house, the tap-room becoming a court of justice, where petty sessions were held.

Another part of the building was appropriated to the use of the Eton Debating Society, commonly called "Pop" (it is said, from "popina," an eating-house), which celebrated its centenary in the present year. Its original domicile was over the small shop of Mrs. Hatton, the confectioner, quarters very useful for gratifying a love of "sock." It is said that at the Saturday four-o'clock meetings the proceedings were often delayed by the consumption of ices and cakes and the drinking of cherry brandy.

The vestibule, where so many wild young bucks had kicked their heels, was turned into a pupil room, in which for a time presided one of the most gifted, if eccentric, Eton masters who ever existed, William Johnson (who afterwards changed his name to Cory), the author of *Ionica* and of the Eton boating song. Highly unconventional in his ways, he could never remain unmoved when he heard the sound of drums outside in the street, indicating that some regiment was passing through the College. Eton has given many a gallant officer to England, and, as the large number of memorials in the Chapel shows, the roll of Etonian soldiers is associated with numberless glorious memories. These stirred the imaginative mind of the clever master, and, keenly desirous that the rising generation should imbibe a due portion of

that martial ardour which was the heritage of their school, he would lead his pupils out to the archway, and, pointing to the passing regiment, proudly exclaim, "Boys, the British army!"

Mr. Johnson was an Eton master from 1845 to 1872, during which period he showed all the qualifications of a gifted teacher, though at times betraying considerable eccentricity. He was much given to introspection, and amused boys would often regale themselves with the sight of Billy Johnson, as they irreverently called him, standing wrapt in profound meditation all alone in the school-yard, totally oblivious of everything about him. He was very short-sighted, which gave rise to the story that he had been seen furiously rushing down Windsor Hill, making futile grabs at a fleeing hen, which he believed to be his hat, blown off by the wind. In school, owing to this infirmity, he was unable to perceive what boys were doing, and the carving of names and cutting into desks and forms was carried on in perfect safety beneath his very nose. Against positive disorder, however, he could well defend himself, and his paradoxical utterances and epigrammatic sayings kept even the most turbulent spirits in check.

His powers of satire were generally recognised as being highly formidable, and masters as well as boys sometimes felt the keen thrust of his rapier. In a school book, *Nuces*, written by him for the use of the lower forms, was to be found a sentence which Etonians universally agreed was a hit at a

somewhat unpopular master, conspicuous for the length of his flowing beard. This ran : "Formerly wise men used to grow beards. Now other persons do so."

Though the poetical masterpiece of Mr. Johnson is the small volume entitled *Ionica*, which contains some beautiful verse, a more generally known composition of his is the Eton boating song, which has been carried by old Etonians practically all over the world. An interesting account of how this song came to be written is given by the Reverend A. C. Ainger in his admirable work on *Eton in Prose and Verse*. It would seem to have been composed in the winter of 1863 for the 4th of June of that year. Some little time later the words were printed in the third number of a periodical called the *Eton Scrap-book*, of which Everard Primrose was one of the joint-editors. A copy of the words were sent in 1865 to a subaltern in the Rifle Brigade, Algernon Drummond by name, who was then with his battalion at Nowshera, in India. This young officer, who, four or five years before, had been one of Johnson's pupils, was haunted by the words till the tune came to them, and eventually, owing to him, a number of officers who had been at Eton made a practice of singing it nightly after mess. Gradually guests learnt it, with the result that old Etonians in other regiments took to singing the song which recalled to them their old school in distant England.

The composition of this boating song, it should

be added, cost William Johnson much trouble and some sleepless nights; nevertheless, its final form contains some lines which are scarcely worthy of an author who, in *Ionica*, has shown himself a true poet. It must, however, be remembered that the song, as we have it, was never intended for the wide publicity which it so speedily attained. No doubt its popularity has been in a great measure caused by the charming tune to which it was set, whilst the whole-hearted and somewhat touching devotion to Eton expressed in the words makes an irresistible appeal to all true sons of the school, particularly to those who remember the days when, free from care, they passed many a happy hour

Skirting past the rushes,
Ruffling o'er the weeds,
Where the lock stream gushes,
Where the cygnet feeds.

The fact that "the rushes" are now no more, having been entirely swept away by the great flood of 1894, will not cause Etonians of a later date to sing the words less heartily, and many a generation yet to come will probably continue to accord this boating song the appreciation which it first obtained nearly half a century ago.

No man, perhaps, ever expressed better the true Eton spirit than Mr. Johnson in some words he uttered a few months before his death. He was a sufferer from heart disease, and realised that his end might at any time occur.

Declining a friend's invitation, he said, "I think it unmannerly to drop down dead in another man's grounds."

The pupil room in which he sat has now ceased to serve that purpose; the old structure of the Christopher, having undergone further changes, is now used merely to accommodate masters, and has ceased to be an Eton house. The only external trace of the inn yard as it was, are some of the old balustrades of the ancient gallery facing the site of the livery stables which were swept away in 1901. Many will remember Charley Wise, the proprietor, who used to be such a familiar figure standing under the archway thirty years ago.

The original sign of the Christopher, it should be added, hangs at the modern Christopher in the High Street. Shelley, when an Eton boy, one night stole the great gilded bunch of grapes from this, and hung it in front of the Headmaster's door, so that the astounded pedagogue ran into it as he was hurrying into school in the morning. The whole character of Shelley was a mass of contradictions, and he seems to have been far from happy at school, where he seldom joined in any sports; according to some he never went on the river, but this is doubtful. The young poet's favourite ramble was Stoke Park and the picturesque churchyard close by, rendered famous for all time by Gray's *Elegy*, of which Shelley is said to have been very fond.

As was shown by the incident of the Christopher's

grapes, Shelley, though as a rule of a meditative disposition, was on occasion given to playing pranks. He once bought a large brass cannon at an auction in Windsor, and harnessed many Lower boys to draw it down into College. It was captured by one of the tutors and kept till the holidays at Hexter's. He was fond of experimenting in science, and set fire to a tree in south meadow by laying a train of gunpowder to it; another time, by means of an electrical machine, he flung his tutor against the wall.

This tutor's name was Bethell, and, according to all accounts, he was a somewhat unattractive character. Amongst the boys he was known as "*Vox et praeterea nihil*" and "Botch" Bethell, because he was supposed always to be making errors or botches in altering their verses. His favourite phrase, which he used to alter as it might be for a long or a short verse, was for the former "*sibi vindicat ipse*," for the latter "*vindicat ipse sibi*," in consequence of which an impudent boy in his house, being one day asked at meal-time what he would take, said, "Sir, I vindicate to myself a slice of mutton." Towards the boys under his charge Bethell was harsh, and sometimes even brutal. Meeting a Lower boy one day coming in with a bowl full of sausages covered by his hat to keep them warm, Bethell sternly inquired, "What have you got there?" The boy, fearing trouble, whimpered, "Nothing, sir," upon which Bethell jerked up the bowl with

his hand and sent hat and sausages flying into the road.

In Shelley's day, life at Eton had changed a good deal, compared with that led some twenty years before, when Arthur Wellesley was a shy, retiring Lower boy, in whom neither masters nor schoolfellows saw any germs of future greatness.

He was about twelve years old when he went to Miss Naylor's, and in spite of his shyness he is supposed to have taken part with his companions in several escapades. Traditions used to be current at Eton about his shooting expeditions up the river at unpermitted seasons and hours; and during the middle of the last century a tree standing near the site of his dame's was known as "the Duke's Tree," because it was said that as a boy the old duke had been fond of climbing it. Arthur Wellesley was not very long at Eton, but nevertheless in after life he cherished a great love for the school to which in due course he sent his sons. One of his first acts on going down to visit them there was to take them to see the door at his old house where, when a boy, he had cut his own name. Though no great athlete himself, he fully appreciated the manly character induced by games and sport, and Creasy declares that not many years before his death he was passing by the playing fields, where numerous groups were happily busied at their games of cricket. Pointing to them, the old Field-Marshal said, "There grows the stuff that won Waterloo."

The great Duke's elder brother, Lord Mornington, afterwards Marquis of Wellesley, had, as is well known, a fanatical love for Eton, where, by his express wish, he was buried, his own beautiful Latin lines¹ recording the satisfaction with which he looked forward to resting there. According to a request which he left behind him, six weeping willows were planted in different parts of the playing fields, and a bench fixed at a particular spot which commanded his favourite view.

As an Eton boy he was a particularly fine elocutionist, as was shown by two recitations of his at Speeches on Election Monday 1778, before a large number of royal visitors; in Strafford's dying speech he drew tears from the audience. David Garrick, hearing of it, complimented the youthful speaker on having done what he had never achieved, namely, made the King weep. To which the clever Etonian returned the graceful answer, "That is because you never spoke to him in the character of a fallen favourite."

In many ways this brother of the Iron Duke may be considered the type of the perfect Etonian, and, as far as classical learning went, scarcely any boy educated at the school ever equalled him. When Dr. Goodall, a contemporary at Eton of Lord Wellesley, was examined in 1818 before the Education Committee of the House of Commons respecting the alleged passing over of Porson in giving promotions to King's College, he at once

¹ See Chapter VI.

declared that the celebrated Greek scholar was not by any means at the head of the Etonians of his day ; and on being asked by Lord Brougham, the Chairman, to name his superior, he at once said, " Lord Wellesley."

Curiously enough, there appears to be no record of where the young nobleman boarded. Presumably it was at Miss Naylor's, where later came his illustrious brother. A commemorative tablet should surely be set up near the spot where those two great Etonians lived when Eton boys. The houses where a number of other prominent men spent their school days are for the most part known, and several others might be honoured in a similar manner, arousing a spirit of noble emulation and pride in a splendid record of those who have deserved well of their country.

A somewhat remarkable coincidence is that George Canning, Gladstone, and the late Lord Salisbury in turn boarded at the same house. In Canning's time the dame was Mrs. Harrington, in Gladstone's Mrs. Shurey, whilst in Lord Robert Cecil's day the Rev. G. Cookesley was in control. Amongst modern politicians Lord Rosebery boarded at Vidal's, Mr. Balfour at Miss Evans's, Lord Curzon at Mr. Oscar Browning's, and Mr. Lewis Harcourt at the Rev. A. C. Ainger's. The room of the present Colonial Secretary was celebrated as being the best decorated in Eton. The writer has a vivid recollection of being impressed by the number of well-arranged pictures which he

saw when, as a small boy, he enjoyed the honour of being asked to breakfast there. The whole place was full of evidences of the artistic taste which admittedly distinguished Mr. Harcourt as First Commissioner of Public Works.



Herbert Stockhore, the "Montem Poet," going to Salt Hill in 1823.

V

MONTEM

THOUGH even to-day a few old Etonians survive who took part in the last Eton Montem, the memory and the recollection of the quaint glories of this ancient and unique festival will soon have become totally obscured by the sordid dust of modern life.

Whilst the lover of old customs may lament that the merry voices of Montem are drowned for ever, it is absolutely certain that even had the famous triennial pageant been allowed to continue after 1844, its celebration could never have been prolonged up to the present day in its ancient form ; for, besides being utterly out of accord with modern ideas and ways, the ceremony would have brought such crowds to Eton as to have rendered any procession to Salt Hill more or less impossible.

To some, however, it may be a matter for regret that no attempt was made to perpetuate the memory of Montem by holding a modified festival in the playing fields.

It is all very well to denounce old customs as merely useless relics of a bygone age. The individual who carries such a view to an extreme is in reality even more unreasonable than he who delights in contemplating the past alone. Both in their different ways are in the wrong: the fanatical worshipper of ancient ways being apt to lose sight of the improvements wrought by progress, whilst he who despises antiquity forgets that the state of society in which we live, and the institutions of the country itself, are all derived from preceding ages. Do or think what we will, our ancestors are far more necessary to us than posterity.

The tumulus or mound, to which the whole school formerly marched in procession at Whitsuntide once in every three years, stands in a field just off the Bath road in the hamlet known as Salt Hill. Supposed by some to be an ancient barrow, it appears to have never been opened, though a portion was sliced off in 1893 when some cottages were built close by. It seems a pity that this hillock—the scene of so many picturesque gatherings in the past—should not have been preserved intact, and some memorial, inscribed with a brief account of the ceremony of Montem, placed upon its summit.



The Montem of 1823
from an old print

The exact origin of "Montem" is involved in considerable obscurity. Perhaps the most plausible explanation is that it arose in a similar manner as the old Winchester custom of "going on Hills." Another theory is that the festival was of feudal origin, the tenure of the College estates having been held by the payment of "salt-silver"—an ancient legal term signifying money paid by tenants in certain manors in lieu of service of bringing their lord's salt from the market. It may have also been originally connected with the curious ceremony of electing a "Boy-Bishop." In a number of old Montem Lists, which the writer has been fortunate enough to acquire, the parson occupies a prominent place in the procession, coming immediately after the Captain and being followed by the clerk. Both ecclesiastical characters, it should be added, were always personated by Collegers, and it was the custom for them to indulge in gross buffoonery, the parson delivering a burlesque sermon on Salt Hill, down which he afterwards kicked the clerk. In 1778 this proceeding so scandalised Queen Charlotte, who was present, that she begged it might never occur again, and henceforth both parson and clerk ceased to figure in the ceremony.

According to some, the original date for celebrating Montem was December 6th, the very day dedicated to St. Nicholas, and usually chosen for the election of the "Boy-Bishop" in ancient times. Be this as it may, in Elizabeth's reign the pro-

cession took place about the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. Granted that it was ever celebrated on St. Nicholas' Day, those who derive it from the "Boy-Bishop" have a coincidence of time in their favour, whence it is not unreasonable to suppose a connection between the triennial festival at Eton and the ancient ecclesiastical mimicry of an episcopal election. Another circumstance favourable to the same supposition is found in a singular custom which formerly made part of the Montem festival. The parson at one period, receiving a Prayer-book, used to read part of the Service to the crowd; which usage bore an obvious resemblance to the mimic services performed by the "Boy-Bishop" in the distant past. Till 1759, when the date was changed to Whit-Tuesday, Montem was annual; it then became biennial, and finally after 1775 triennial.

In those days it had already assimilated some striking features of that curious alliance of licensed mendicity, brigandage, and gaiety—the modern charity bazaar. Of its ancient character as a semi-religious festival nothing remained, and it had become a collection for the benefit of the Captain of the Collegers who might have been fortunate enough to obtain a vacancy at King's College, Cambridge.

The proceedings in College which heralded the approach of Montem were characteristic and peculiar. In former days it was the custom that any vacancy at King's should be immediately announced

at Eton by the “resignation man,” generally the coachman of the Provost of that College, a delay of three weeks all but a day being allowed to the Captain of the school in which he might make his preparations for leaving. If, however, this period of grace should chance to expire on the very eve of Whitsun-Tuesday Montem-day, the right of being Captain would lapse to the Collegger who was next on the list, so that the twentieth day before Whitsun-Tuesday in that year was a very critical day for the captain and second Collegger. Till midnight it could not be known for certain who would be Captain. The boys called that night “Montem-Sure Night,” when wild excitement prevailed amongst the Colleggers in Long Chamber, and as the last stroke of midnight sounded from the clock in Lupton’s Tower, some fifty-two stout oaken beds would be let fall on to the floor with a thundering crash, numberless shutters would be slammed with furious energy, and “Montem-Sure,” shouted by many powerful young throats, would ring out all over Eton.

Whoever was Captain of the school on the Whitsun-Tuesday in a Montem year became *ipso facto* Captain of Montem. But, as has before been said, the Captain of the school could not be known for certain till within twenty days of the eventful Whitsun-Tuesday.

A King’s scholar could, if he succeeded in passing his “election trials” every year at the end of July, remain at Eton a twelvemonth after passing the

last examination, provided he was not yet nineteen. If by that time he had not gone to King's College, Cambridge, he was superannuated, and had to leave Eton. At the examination at the end of every July those boys who had passed their eighteenth birthday were placed in school order of merit, and were called from thence to Cambridge at any time of the year, whenever, through death, marriage, or any cause, a vacancy occurred in the number of the seventy members of King's College, in order to supply which King Henry VI. founded his school at Eton of seventy scholars. Montem only happened every third year, for which reason it was only possible that a boy who was born in such a year that he would have passed his eighteenth birthday on the July previous to a Montem could ever become captain of Montem, and obtain the financial benefits accruing from the collection made at that festival.

William Malim, the Headmaster, who wrote an account of Eton for the Royal Commission who visited the school in 1561, thus described the Montem of his day :—

About the festival of the Conversion of Saint Paul, at nine o'clock on a day chosen by the Master, in the accustomed manner in which they go to collect nuts in September, the boys go ad montem. The hill is a sacred spot according to the boyish religion of the Etonians ; on account of the beauty of the countryside, the delicious grass, the cool shade of bowers, and the melodious chorus of birds, they make it a holy shrine for Apollo and the Muses, celebrate it in songs, call it Tempe, and extol it above Helicon. Here the novices or new boys, who have not yet submitted to blows in the

Eton ranks, manfully and stoutly, for a whole year, are first seasoned with salt and then separately described in little poems which must be as salted and graceful as possible. Next, they make epigrams against the new boys, one vying with another to surpass in all elegance of speech and in witticisms. Whatever comes to the lips may be uttered freely so long as it is in Latin, courteous, and free from scurrility. Finally they wet their faces and cheeks with salt tears, and then at last they are initiated in the rites of the veterans. Ovations follow, and little triumphs, and they rejoice in good earnest, because their labours are past, and because they are admitted to the society of such pleasant comrades. These things finished they turn home at five o'clock and after dinner play till eight.

In the days of Elizabeth, and during the turbulent time of the Civil War, Montem seems to have assumed a more regular and ceremonious form. Only, however, at the beginning of the eighteenth century did it acquire those military characteristics which it retained with little modification till its abolition in 1847. Till the middle of the eighteenth century (1759) it was held in the last week in January, but at that date Whitsun-Tuesday was appointed as the great day. Dr. Barnard it was who altered the dresses and formed the boys into a regular collegiate regiment.

In ancient times the collectors, that is to say the boys who scoured the roads for miles round Eton to collect contributions, carried large bags which actually contained salt, a pinch of which they gave to every contributor as a receipt. In the rough old times, when any boorish-looking countryman after having contributed a trifle asked for salt,

it used to be a favourite pleasantry to fill his mouth with it. The last Montem at which salt was actually used seems to have been that of 1793. The cry of "Salt! Salt!" lasted long after tickets had taken the place of the condiment, and, indeed, endured to the end, embroidered bags being proffered to travellers along the roads, who, in return for contributions which varied from fifty pounds to sixpence, were presented with little blue tickets inscribed with one of the Latin Montem mottoes. In the years preceding the abolition of the ceremony, *Mos pro Lege* and *Pro More et Monte* were used in alternate years. Not infrequently people who had never heard of the ancient custom were very much astonished at being asked for salt. William the Third, it is said, soon after his accession, had his carriage stopped by Montem runners on the Bath road, and his Dutch guards, being not unnaturally indignant at their monarch being waylaid in such uncereemonious fashion, were only prevented from cutting down the boys, whom they took for some kind of highwaymen, by the King himself, who good-naturedly gave the salt-bearers a liberal contribution.

In 1706 Montem would seem to have evolved into something of the same form which it retained till its abolition, the organisation being of a military kind. In that year Stephen Poyntz was captain, Berkeley Seymour lieutenant, Theophilus Thompson ensign, and Anthony Allen marshal, or, as the Montem List always termed it, "mareschal."

In connection with the ceremony, Poyntz composed the following lines :—

Allen pandit iter, Poyntz instruit agmen,
Cogit iter Seymour Thompsonque insignia vibrat.

I think I am right in saying that it has hitherto escaped notice that the great Duke of Wellington took part in an “ad Montem.” An old list in my possession shows that at the Montem of June 5th, 1781, Mr. Wesley, as he is termed, marched to Salt Hill as one of the attendants of an Upper boy named Lomax. An appended note adds, “His Grace’s first appearance in arms.” His sons, Lord Douro and Lord Charles Wellesley, marched in the processions of 1820 and 1823.

At the Montem of 1826 Gladstone, in order evidently to express that sympathy for down-trodden nations for which he was so celebrated in after life, went to Salt Hill in Greek costume wearing the fustanella and embroidered cap. This was Pickering’s Montem, and owing to Gladstone and others repressing a good deal of wanton damage, the sum obtained for him was one of the largest on record.

The march to Salt Hill was, of course, always somewhat tumultuous, and much licence prevailed. As time went on efforts were made to purge the fête of its disorderly features, but up to the very end there was a good deal of horseplay and rowdiness amongst the boys ; indeed, at the last Montem but one, in 1841, they did great damage to the inns at Salt Hill, whilst it was rare that the gardens

of these hostelries came unscathed through the eventful day, owing to the boys slashing the plants and bushes with their swords. If the Captain of Montem happened to be unpopular, much damage was often done, the boys being well aware that on him would fall the burden of compensation, which had to be paid out of the Montem money; and it is said that on one occasion an unfortunate Captain was actually out of pocket owing to the compensation he had to pay.

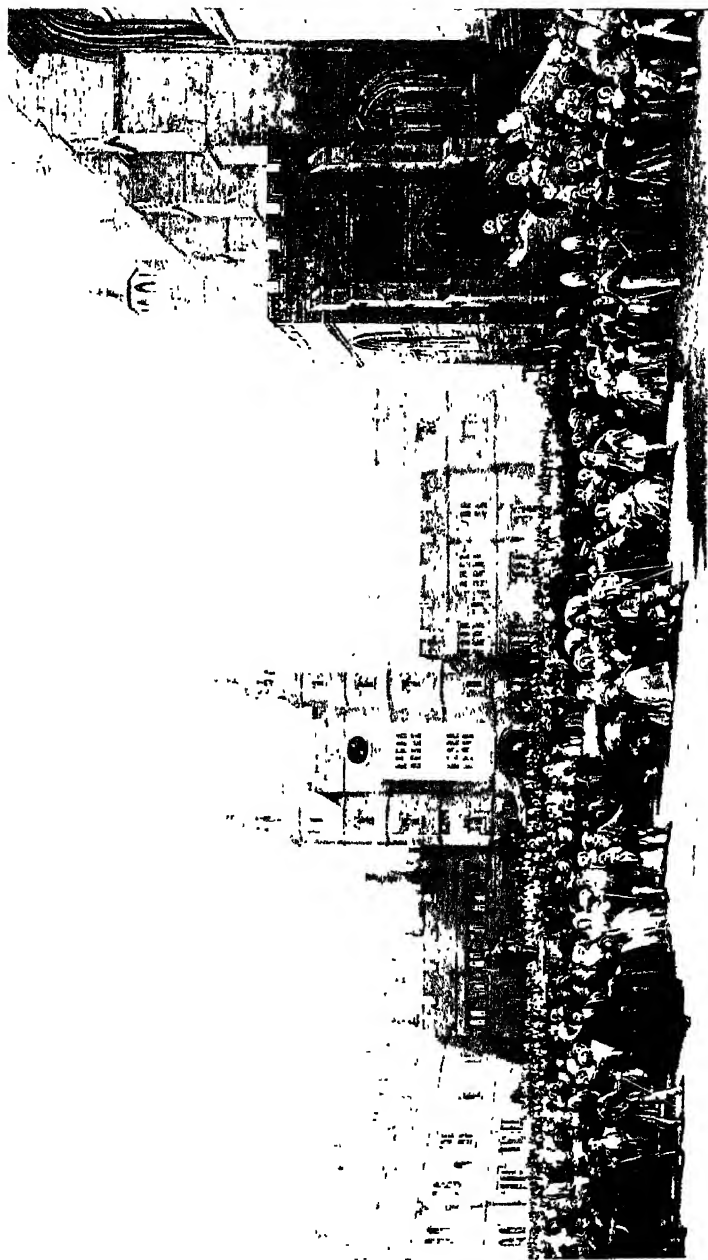
Montem commenced by a number of the senior boys taking post upon the bridges or other leading places of all the avenues around Windsor and Eton soon after the dawn of day. These runners (or "servitors," as the Montem List calls them) were indefatigable in collecting salt or money from every one whom they came across, and for seven or eight miles around Eton travellers were liable to be accosted. The runners who worked in outlying districts generally drove in a gig, being accompanied by an attendant dressed in white—well able to protect the runners against violence or robbery. The total of the sums collected was afterwards given to the two salt-bearers—one Colleger and one Oppidan—Upper boys who marched in the rear of the procession. In the earlier part of the day these functionaries remained in the precincts of College. The twelve runners were gorgeously attired in fancy dresses of various kinds, bright colours predominating; they wore plumed hats and buff boots, and carried silken bags

strengthened with netting to hold the “salt”—that is the money which they obtained. Their peculiar badges of office were painted staves emblazoned with mottoes at the top, which in most cases consisted of short quotations from Virgil or Horace. “Quando ita majores” was a favourite one. Occasionally, however, the motto was modern, “Nullum jus sine sale,” for instance. Contributors of “salt” received in return a small dated ticket inscribed *Pro More et Monte* or *Mos pro Lege*. This, placed in a hat or pinned on to a coat, would pass any one free with all runners for the rest of the day.

Nothing could have been prettier or more animated than the old school-yard the morning of a Montem, filled as it was with the boys in their military uniforms of blue and red, or in fancy dresses, for the most part of a rich and tasteful kind. Fantastically attired Turks, Albanians, and Highlanders mingled with courtiers and pages of every age, an additional note of colour being furnished by the bright dresses of numerous female relatives and friends who had come down to Eton to see the show. In addition to the boys in uniform and fancy dress, a considerable number of Lower School who followed at the end of the procession wore the old Eton costume of blue jacket and white trousers, only abandoned after the death of George III. Such boys carried long thin wands about five feet long, which after the ceremonial were, according to immemorial usage, cut in two by the corporals with their swords.

Occasionally, however, some of the "polemen," as they were called, contrived to keep their wands intact to the end of the day—a rare and difficult feat.

At the close of the eighteenth century Montem was often attended by Royalty. The College flag, of rich crimson silk emblazoned with the Eton arms and the motto *Mos pro Lege* within a wreath of oak and laurel, would on the great day be displayed at one of the Long Chamber windows early in the morning, and at eleven o'clock George III. would generally appear with his family, and be received by the boys with a long-continued roar of huzzas. The King would then be met by the Headmaster at the entrance to the school-yard and conducted to an elaborate breakfast, after which the Royal party would move with the procession towards Salt Hill, the principal scene of the day's display. A breakfast given by the Captain of Montem in the College Hall continued to be one of the features of the day right up to the last celebration in 1844. In the *Illustrated London News* of that year can be seen, amongst other interesting pictures of the last Montem, a cut of this banquet. The unrestored Hall is filled with guests, the College flag being suspended above the High Table. After the feast general exhilaration prevailed. My cousin, Sir Algernon West—a survivor of the last Montem, which he attended as a "poleman"—tells me that he has an unpleasant memory of a schoolfellow, who had partaken of the pleasures of the table too freely, prodding him with a sword.



The Montem of 1841.—The March round the School-Yard

Engraved by C. G. Lewis after a drawing by W. Evans

Print lent by D. Jay, Esq.

The procession always commenced in the Great Quadrangle at Eton, and proceeded through Eton to Slough, and round to Salt Hill, where the boys all passed before the King or Queen and ascended the Montem; here an oration was delivered, and the Grand Standard was displayed with much grace and activity by the Standard-bearer, selected from among the senior boys.

There were two extraordinary salt-bearers appointed to attend the Royalties; these salt-bearers were always attired in fanciful habits, generally costly and sometimes superb, and each carried an embroidered bag, which not only received the royal salt, but also whatever was collected by the out-stationed runners.

The donation of the King or Queen, or, as it was called, "the royal salt," was always fifty guineas each; the Prince of Wales thirty guineas; all the other Princes and Princesses twenty guineas each.

As soon as the ceremony "ad Montem" was over the Royal Family returned to Windsor. The boys then dined in detachments—seniors separated from juniors—in the taverns at Salt Hill, the gardens at that place being laid out for such ladies and gentlemen as chose to take any refreshment, whilst several bands of music played. The "Windmill Inn," the garden of which was on the other side of the road, was then often the scene of much riotous festivity, as was a rival house—the "Castle." The abolition of Montem was, of course, a severe blow to both hostelries. About twenty-five years

ago the "Windmill" was about to be converted into a school when a fire broke out and the old building was destroyed. A noticeable feature of the exterior had been some magnificent wistaria, the stems of which were twisted into agonised shapes by the flames. The "Castle" actually did become a school. A large part of the original house was pulled down in 1887 and the rest of the place converted into a compact country residence. The "Windmill" was known to many as "Botham's," from the name of its proprietor, who in the palmy days of Montem during the last century divided what was a profitable monopoly with the host of the "Castle," Partridge by name. The latter's charges were so high that Foote, after partaking of some refreshment in his hostelry, once told him that he ought to change his name to Woodcock—"on account of the length of his bill."

After having dined at these inns all the boys returned in the same order of procession as in the morning, and, marching round the Great Quadrangle in Eton School, were dismissed. In the eighteenth century the Captain would then go and pay his respects to the Royal Family at the Queen's Lodge, Windsor, previous to his departure for King's College, Cambridge; to defray which expense the produce of the Montem was presented to him. Upon Whit-Tuesday in the year 1796 it amounted to over one thousand guineas. The sum, however, varied considerably in amount, its magnitude being in a great manner deter-

mined by his popularity or unpopularity in the school. In the latter case, as has been said, the result of the collection would sometimes be a good deal diminished by damage done in the gardens of the inns at Salt Hill, where ill-disposed boys would destroy the shrubs and flowers with their swords in order to run up the bill. All the other expenses of the day were paid for out of the Salt, and in the latter years of Montem the total collected generally amounted to something between a thousand and eight hundred pounds ; but when all disbursements had been made the Captain was very lucky if he got three or four hundred pounds. A proof of this is that when Montem was discontinued in 1847, Dr. Hawtrey gave the boy who would have been Captain two hundred pounds contributed by himself and a few friends out of their own pockets as compensation. This sum the Headmaster had ascertained was a fair equivalent for the net amount usually pocketed by the Captain after all expenses had been paid. These outgoings, it must be remembered, were large, including as they did a breakfast to the whole of the Fifth and Sixth Forms and a dinner to personal friends in the evening, in addition to which there were numerous other disbursements which amounted to a considerable sum.

In an early account of Montem *circa* 1560 there is a reference to the new boys, termed "recentes," being seasoned with salt, meaning probably that they had to make some small monetary contribution ; for up to the last Montem celebration, by

reason of a curious usage, the origin of which was unknown, boys who had come to Eton within the preceding year were expected to pay the Captain a small sum called "recent-money."

At the last celebrations of Montem the order of procession differed somewhat from that observed in olden days. It was then headed by the marshal, followed by six attendants; band; captain, followed by eight attendants; sergeant-major, followed by two attendants; twelve sergeants, two and two, each followed by an attendant; colonel, followed by six attendants and four polemen; corporals, two and two, followed by two polemen apiece; second band; ensign with flag, followed by six attendants and four polemen; corporals, two and two, followed by one or two polemen apiece; lieutenant, followed by four attendants; salt-bearers, runners, and stewards; and a poleman brought up the rear of the procession.

The flag was always solemnly waved in the school-yard before the procession started, and on arriving at Salt Hill it was waved a second time at the top of the mount, the boys all clustering round like a swarm of bees and cheering with great vigour. Great importance was always attached to the waving of the College standard in a proper manner, and for a long time previous to Montem day the Ensign practised for hours in Long Chamber. The old traditional way of manipulating the banner was as far as possible followed, the custom being to wave it round in every direction and conclude by



Ad Montem, 1838

From a scarce coloured print in the possession of Messrs. Robson & Co., Coventry Street, W.

one triumphant final flourish which was the grand climax of the whole celebration.

A complete military organisation with regular uniforms was adopted by the school on Montem day, and Eton became a collegiate regiment. The senior Collegers ranked as captain, the second salt-bearer as marshal, the other Sixth-Form Collegers becoming ensign, lieutenant, sergeant-major, and steward; any other Sixth-Form Collegers not acting as runners were sergeants. The captain of the Oppidans was always a salt-bearer by right, whilst the next to him on the school list was colonel; the other Sixth-Form Oppidans ranked as sergeants. All the Fifth-Form Oppidans were corporals and wore red tail-coats with gilt buttons and white trousers. They had also crimson sashes round their waists, black leather sword-belts, and swords hanging by their sides. A cocked hat and plume of feathers exactly like that worn by field-officers completed this martial attire. The Fifth-Form Collegers' dress was like that of the Fifth-Form Oppidans, insomuch as they donned sash, sword, cocked hat, and plume; but their coats were blue instead of red, so that they resembled naval officers more than military men. The coats of the Sixth Form, both Collegers and Oppidans, had distinctive details of uniform denoting rank, which could be at once distinguished from the various forms of epaulet and great or little prevalence of gilt. The steward wore the ordinary full dress of the period. The Lower boys who acted as polemen wore the old Eton costume

—blue coats with gilt buttons, white waistcoats and trousers, silk stockings and pumps. The pages of the Sixth Form and others were attired in fancy dresses, often of a rich description. A feature of the last Montem uniforms were the buttons. These bore the Eton arms, Royal crown, and motto, *Mos pro Lege*, together with the date of the foundation of the College.

Montem coats were allowed to be worn after the great day was over, but the boys suffered for this privilege, most masters generally selecting them to construe in preference to their more soberly clad schoolmates. One master, indeed, became so notorious for this that eventually his whole division appeared in red coats, so as to prevent any particular boys from being singled out. The last Montem coat worn at Eton is said to have been observed in 1847.

As a general rule pretty good order seems to have been preserved in connection with Montem, and this is the more wonderful when one remembers that a large number of the boys wore real swords and indulged in liberal potations at the inns at Salt Hill. In 1796, it is true, some disorder did occur near the historic mount, a large crowd surging around the carriage in which sat the Queen and the Princesses. George III., however, soon put matters to rights by calling out to some of the worst offenders, "Surely you are not Etonians?" adding that he did not remember their faces, and felt sure Eton boys would be better behaved.

Three years later, at the Montem of 1799, an Eton boy made a mistake of which he was afterwards much ashamed. As the procession was moving along, a visitor on a spirited and fiery horse kept pressing closer to it than was pleasant, and one of the sergeants, a youth named Beckett, putting one hand significantly upon his sword-hilt and the other on the rider's knee, exclaimed in a bold manner, "I should recommend you, my friend, not to let your horse tread upon Me." In reply to this the horseman merely smiled, bowed, and drew his horse away. It was afterwards discovered that the stranger was the King of Hanover. Altogether Montem was a day of great enjoyment for those who were present at it, much jollity and fun of the old English sort being one of its chief characteristics. Most of the visitors were well acquainted with its traditions and entered thoroughly into its spirit. A favourite joke was to make a pretence of refusing to contribute whilst concealing the little blue paper receipt previously received as quittance for salt paid.

"I will not attempt to reason with you about the pleasures of Montem," said an old Etonian, who was defending the old festival against the attacks of one of those hawk-eyed commercial gamblers who, calling themselves "business men," dominate the modern world; "but to an Etonian it is enough that it brought pure and ennobling recollections—evoked associations of hope and happiness—and made even the wise feel that there was some-

thing better than wisdom, and the rich something nobler than wealth. I like to think of the faces I saw round the old mount, recalling school friendships and generous rivalries. At the last Montem I attended, it is true I saw fifty fellows of whom I remember only the nicknames — not a few degenerated into scheming M.P.'s, cunning lawyers, or speculators — but at Montem one forgot all that. Leaving the plodding world of reality for one day, such men regained the dignity of Sixth-Form Etonians."

The last celebration of Montem took place on Whitsun-Tuesday in 1844, on which occasion some of its ancient features were altered. The dinner, for instance, took place on Fellow's Eyot, within the College precincts, instead of at Salt Hill, the boys having also to answer to their names in the playing fields. An ominous sign, which seemed to forebode that the ancient ceremony was soon to be discontinued for ever, was that in the last year of Montem the famous cry of "Montem Sure" was not heard to ring out of the Long Chamber windows, no bedsteads crashed, and no shutters banged. Montem, it is true, still lived, but it seemed to be felt that its end was near. Nevertheless, the procession took place according to immemorial usage, and the fancifully attired throng of boys, accompanied by a crowd of carriages, foot and horse, wended its way to the classic mount where the ceremonial which countless generations of Etonians had gone through was

duly performed. Prince Albert, for instance, was stopped on Windsor Bridge, and in compliance with a request for salt, gave £100. At Salt Hill the bands played merrily, and the crowd of boys and old Etonians cheered as of yore when, for the last time on the summit of the mount the Ensign waved the historic College banner, inscribed with the quaint old motto, *Pro More et Monte*. Not a few, however, amongst the throng gathered there had a presentiment that they were assisting at the obsequies of the time-honoured ceremony, and as they wended their way back to town felt that Montem was now to be numbered with the many other old-world festivals which so-called progress was sweeping away.

These gloomy forebodings proved to be only too well founded. Montem, indeed, had become somewhat incongruous with the changed spirit which was producing a purely utilitarian age. The facilities afforded by the then newly constructed railway also flooded Eton and Slough with hordes of visitors, many of them highly undesirable, besides which the Press was none too tender in the attitude which it adopted towards the old festival.

In June 1844, for instance, *Punch* published an amusing, if rather malicious, illustrated attack upon the Eton festival, entitled "The Holborn Montem," in which it pictured the effect which would be produced were a number of London ragamuffins permitted to hold up foot-passengers and omnibuses whilst making demands for salt.

Dr. Hawtrey, the Headmaster, was bitterly opposed to the continuance of the old ceremony, and to him and to the Provost it owed its abolition. The remainder of the College authorities were about equally divided in their opinions. When Provost Hodgson put the matter before them they voted as follows :—

For abolishing Montem.

Hodgson, Provost.
Grover, Vice-Provost.
Bethell.
Green.

For preserving Montem.

Plumtre.
Carter.
Dupuis.
Wilder.

Queen Victoria personally is known to have been opposed to the abolition ; nevertheless she did not care to interfere, and in 1847 it was announced that no celebration of Montem would take place, and though many earnest representations were made by old Etonians to Dr. Hawtrey, the decision to abolish Montem was maintained. Had the Provost been of the same type as Dr. Goodall, some semblance at least of the ancient ceremony would have been preserved, but the post happened to be held by Provost Hodgson, the friend of Byron, who, though a man of poetical turn of mind, was a great reformer. He made many changes in College, and abolished the horrors of Long Chamber, which is much to his credit. On the other hand, he was perhaps too thorough-going in doing away with the ancient festival of Montem, which might have been preserved in an altered form. *Per se* it was, in many respects, indefensible,

being full of absurdities ; nevertheless it might have been continued in some reformed and improved shape.

The abolition was keenly resented by the boys, and on the Whit-Tuesday, when the ceremony should have taken place, the old red flag, which had figured at many Montems, was hung out of one of the windows of Upper School as a signal of revolt, and something like a riot ensued. This was, however, in the main confined to the Lower boys, who, after smashing a few windows (for the repair of which their parents afterwards grumblingly paid), were soon reduced to order.

Numbers of old Etonians sadly shook their heads when they heard that Montem had become a thing of the past, but, as has been said, remonstrance and protest were alike unavailing to make the Eton authorities realise that entire abolition was too drastic a measure.

The truth is that at that period all over England old-fashioned merrymaking was beginning to be checked by the chilling force of that utilitarian commercialism which has since dominated the country. The modern spirit, ever prone to exchange happiness for success, was already making its influence felt, whilst many, under the false impression that romance, tradition, and fancy counted for nothing, were straining every nerve to secure the bone whilst entirely failing to obtain its marrow.

The passing of Montem, besides causing some

severe pangs of grief to many an old Etonian, greatly perturbed a number of humbler folk, and its abolition was bitterly lamented by a host of tradesmen, cabmen, omnibus drivers, innkeepers, and the like. Numbers of people derived either pleasure or profit from the triennial celebration. The most sincere mourners were the cab and omnibus drivers, who bitterly regretted their lost harvest, and on the anniversary of the great festival wore black crape upon their arms.

An interesting and curious exhibition of Montem relics and costumes, it may be mentioned, was shown at Eton in the Upper School during the celebration of the 450th anniversary of the foundation of the College. Of the three great Eton festivals, Montem, Election Saturday, and the 4th of June, the last and most modern of the three alone survives. The proceedings on Election Saturday, it should be added, were of a similar kind to those which still take place on the birthday of King George the Third—that is to say, the boats' crews wore gala dresses and dined at Surly, after which there were fireworks, whilst the bells of Windsor pealed and the crews cheered.

Before leaving the subject of Montem a few words may not be out of place as to a quaint character who was known to many generations of Etonians as the Montem poet. This was Herbert Stockhore, who, dressed in quaint attire in a donkey-cart, was a prominent feature at all Montem celebrations from 1784 to 1835, when

he was ninety. Before being chosen Montem poet Stockhore was a Windsor bricklayer living in a little house built by himself, which he called Mount Pleasant, in a lane leading from Windsor to the meadows.

On the 4th of June good old George III. always presented Stockhore with a present of gold, and George IV. continued the kindly practice. At other times Stockhore subsisted entirely upon the bounty of the Etonians and the inhabitants of Windsor and Eton, who never failed to administer to his wants and liberally supply him with many little comforts in return for his harmless pleasantries.

Stockhore had a time-honoured method of composing his odes well calculated to ensure their favourable reception. The quality of his versification was, of course, very moderate. It may be judged from the following, culled from the Montem Ode of 1826 (Pickering's year):—

I, Herbert Stockhore, once more,
In spite of age and pains rheumatic,
Hop down to "Montem" with verses Attic,
To make the Muse as have done before.
For why should I lie a-bed groaning and bickering
When I ought to be up to sing Captain Pickering.

A happier effort, perhaps, was his greeting to George III. :—

And now we'll sing
God save the king,
And send him long to reign,
That he may come
To have some fun
At Montem once again.

It is not, however, on account of his rhymes that Stockhore deserves to be remembered, but on account of the fact that he was one of the last of those lowly-born characters who by their native wit, good-humour, and kindly eccentricity secured a unique place in the affections of many far above them in rank, intellect, and wealth. The Board School has now rendered all such humble types extinct.

Stockhore had originally been a sailor, and some said also a soldier. At any rate on "Montem" day he wore a fancy robe of various colours thrown over his old military coat, with trimmings of divers cotton ribbons. An extemporised coronet, encircled with bay and crowned with feathers, completed a costume which astounded visitors unaware of the bard's identity. His eccentric though harmless habits rendered him a popular character with the Eton boys, and his recitation of a Montem Ode was always warmly applauded, and owing to the sale of his doggerel and the contributions he received the old man led a fairly comfortable existence. His way was first of all to set down upon paper the names of those about to take part in "Montem" and other details furnished to him by some one in a position to know, after which he would compose a rough jumble of rhyming lines. This was then submitted to some Colleger, who undertook its revision, and was printed for the author to vend, which he did at a very remunerative price; it also formed an excuse for the

extraction of coins from old friends and visitors to Eton. Stockhore, though in his latter years, like his rhymes, much given to limping, was able to attend the Montem of 1835, at which time he had reached the great age of ninety.

At the next one, held in 1838, though still alive, being too feeble to go, he was represented at the great festival by a man named Ryder. Three years later, in 1841, Stockhore passed away, aged ninety-six years. The boys then chose Edward Irvine by vote, but though he or some other claimant was still hanging about Eton half a century ago, the office really died with Stockhore, for his successors had no trace of the quaint and simple individuality which had been known to many generations of Etonians, one of whom, a few years before the famous Montem poet's death, composed the following lines :—

Be Herbert Stockhore all my theme,
The laureate's praises I indite ;
He erst who sung in Montem's praise,
And Thespis like, from out his cart
Recited his extempore lays
On Eton's sons, in costume smart,
Who told of captains bold and grand,
Lieutenants, marshals, seeking salt ;
Of colonels, majors, cap in hand,
Who bade e'en majesty to halt ;
Told how the ensign nobly waved
The colours on the famous hill ;
And names from dull oblivion saved,
Who ne'er the niche of fame can fill ;
Who, like to Campbell, lends his name
To many a whim he ne'er did write ;

When witty scholars, to their shame,
 'Gainst masters hurl a satire trite.
But fare thee well, Ad Montem's bard,
 Farewell, my mem'ry's early friend ;
May misery never press thee hard,
 Ne'er may disease thy steps attend ;
Be all thy wants by those supply'd,
 Whom charity ne'er fail'd to move ;
Etona's motto, crest, and pride,
 Is feeling, courage, friendship, love.
Poor harmless soul, thy merry stave
 Shall live when nobler poets bend ;
And when Atropos to the grave
 Thy silvery locks of grey shall send,
Etona's sons shall sing thy fame,
 Ad Montem still thy verse resound,
Still live an ever-cherished name,
 As long as salt and sock abound.

The "famous hill" alluded to in these verses now presents a most melancholy appearance, its summit being vulgarised by a *châlet* of miserable design, whilst, as has been said, the glory of the Inns close by has long departed. For some time after Montem days, however, the Windmill (Botham's) seems to have been an occasional resort of Etonians, for an interesting oak table (saved from the fire), which is now in the possession of the popular Master—Mr. Edward Littleton Vaughan—has carved upon it the names of some seventy well-known Etonians, besides initials, and dates, mostly ranging from 1845 to 1857. It would therefore seem that, contrary to tradition, the names were not carved after Montem, but are rather those of boys who frequented Botham's, as their predecessors had frequented the old Christopher.

VI

THE COLLEGE BUILDINGS

IN the course of the various changes which Eton has undergone, the old Quadrangle (till 1706 not paved but grass), which in old Montem days was gay with a riot of high-spirited youth, has, on the whole, escaped disfiguring alteration. The original intention of the founder was to have a cloister in the Quadrangle; and a line of lead running beneath the windows, together with some foundations discovered in 1876, lead one to suppose that such a scheme was actually begun. On the whole, the general aspect of the school-yard, which enthusiastic Etonians regard as a sort of "rose-red city half as old as time," remains unaltered. New, however, are the pinnacles of the Chapel and the Gothic window of the Hall.

Within the last hundred years almost the only drastic changes have been those in its exterior, the western end of which was remodelled at the restoration of 1858, and the construction of a bow window for the master residing in College, whose rooms are on the left-hand side of the Quadrangle, at the end of what was formerly the ancient Long

Chamber. Otherwise there is small evidence of change. The brickwork retains its old mellowed colouring, and the founder's statue remains as grimy as ever, though perhaps a trifle less black than in the days when its sable hue convinced the small child of one of the College officials that Henry VI. had been a black man. The infant in question, as a loyal son of Eton, had been taught to salute this statue (which, according to old custom, should always be passed on the right-hand side) whenever he went through the school-yard. Out for an airing with its nurse in Windsor one day, the child, perceiving a private of one of the West India Regiments, became convinced that it was Henry VI. in the flesh. Solemnly rising in its perambulator and reverently exclaiming "Founder," the astounded soldier was accorded a salute which filled him with amazement.

The feature of the Quadrangle, of course, is the fine tower of Provost Lupton, under which at Election time, up to 1871, the Provost of Eton was wont to greet the Provost of King's with a kiss of peace, and the Captain of the school to deliver his Latin Cloister Speech. The gates here are closed on the death of a Provost, and not opened till his successor is appointed. Carved above the window of Election Chamber, over the gateway, is a representation of the Assumption of the Virgin, to which in pre-Reformation days Collegers reverently raised their hats.

Passing through this arch one reaches the



The Cloisters of Eton College

From a coloured print dated 1816

cloisters, about which linger so many old-world memories. Once known as the "tower cloister," this appellation seems in the eighteenth century to have been discarded for that of "the Green Yard." The railings here, of Sussex iron, were put up in 1724-25.

A good many alterations have recently been carried out in this part of the College, some of which have of necessity rather impaired its old-world charm.

On the cloister side of Lupton's Tower a strengthening arch and support have been built to guard against possible subsidence, some signs of which had begun to appear. In the cloisters also certain expedient changes and renovations have also been made.

During the middle of the eighteenth century an additional storey was added to the cloister buildings, and, owing to the narrowness of the structure, communication between the new storey and the old was eventually effected by affixing a staircase to the outside wall, in which a hole was made to give entrance to the staircase. This staircase has now been entirely removed, and a new staircase between the first and second floors fitted in two flights, each stretching the whole breadth of the building. Election Hall now occupies practically the whole of the space between Lupton's Tower and the north side of school-yard. Formerly there was a small room at the tower end, and a passage past this room communicating

with Election Chamber on the lowest floor of the tower. This room is now part of Election Hall, most of the passage having disappeared, whilst the beautiful oak panelling has been removed to the new staircase. The roof of Election Hall is now higher than of yore, the increased size of the room and the bad state of the roof having called for such an alteration. The room over Election Chamber has been converted into a sitting-room, and the partitions in it have been removed, so that it is now the same size as Election Chamber and looks out both ways. The clock remains unchanged. In the remoter part of the house the passage has been widened, and the walls have been stripped of the plaster and now show the old timber. A new door has also been made under the tower, giving access to a staircase which leads straight up to the first floor.

The Provost's Lodge has also undergone some change. The dining-room here—the Magna Parlura—which contains portraits of various kings and provosts and occupies the centre of the Lodge, has undergone considerable renovation at certain periods, especially in the middle of the last century, when it was decorated with considerable care by Dr. Hawtrey. The ceiling was then painted and the panelling, reaching to the top of the room, finished with a dado of deal, which has now been removed, and the oak, which before was grained, scraped. The panelling has also been lowered and now rests on the floor, the old timbers above

being visible. Two stone windows have been opened up in this room, which had formerly been blocked by the Georgian staircase. At the other end of the room an interesting discovery was made of another Tudor door opening into the gallery just opposite the stairs. On each side of the door are Tudor windows with wooden frames. Most of the doors opening into the gallery are of Tudor workmanship, but these are the only two Tudor windows that have been discovered in the College. The woodwork half-way down the staircase is of good Gothic workmanship, whereas the staircase is of much later date. The servants' hall, on the ground floor, was formerly divided by partitions, but these have been removed. The panelling here is of the seventeenth century, the panels large and tall in design. At one end of the room there is an alcove faced with the original mirrors and containing a basin set in beautiful inlaid work of black and white marble. This, however, is covered up with a wooden plate, which conceals the marble.

At the time of these alterations there was some talk of removing the railings in the cloisters, which are of Sussex iron, and reviving an inner walk, traces of which have been discovered round the edge of the grass. On the tower side the railings have already gone—the remainder, let us hope, will be left untouched. A great feature of the cloisters is the old Cloister Pump, which, as in the days when a less luxurious race of Collegers washed at its spout, continues to yield the best

water in Eton. This old pump is associated with the cry of "Cloister P!" at which the lowest boy present had to fetch a canful of the sacred water, the cry which sent every fag in Long Chamber tearing down Sixth-Form passage. Not very far away is the well-worn stone staircase up which so many generations of Collegers have made their way into the Hall, which, in spite of renovation, still retains a certain amount of interest for those fond of relics of another age.

A considerable portion of the existing structure dates from about 1450, and to some extent follows the design favoured by King Henry VI. The founder's original idea, however, was that a northern bay window should face the southern one. He also contemplated a porch with a tower over it. One must be thankful that at the restoration of 1858 the College authorities did not attempt to carry out these plans.

The early architectural history of the Hall is somewhat puzzling. For some undiscovered reason it was begun in stone and finished in brick, whilst three large fireplaces were constructed but never used, being covered with panelling till the so-called restoration of the last century. In 1721 some alterations were carried out according to the plan of a Mr. Rowland, but from that time till 1858 the Hall remained as it is shown in the illustration facing page 164. At that date, however, the Rev. Mr. Wilder, the Fellow who had contributed so liberally to the modernisation of the interior of

the College Chapel, turned his attention to the old building, which was restored at his expense. It is to be regretted that a good deal of Renaissance work of historical interest then disappeared, retaining some features of the original design constructed in its place.

For some unexplained reason (apparently it was in fair repair) the old roof was destroyed, and a new one substituted. The simple three-light Renaissance west window, with a curious ornamented ledge beneath, gave way to an elaborate Gothic window, filled with stained glass representing the very "apocryphal" story of Henry VII.'s Eton days. Beneath this was erected an elaborate screen of panelling, decorated with the arms of successive provosts. The rest of the old panelling was allowed to remain, though, owing to a very thorough process of renovation, a great proportion of the present woodwork is modern. Along the top of the panelling may still be seen a number of old nails. From these, according to an old Eton custom, Collegers at Shrovetide used to hang scrolls of Bacchus verses which were suspended by coloured ribbons. These Bacchus verses, written in praise or abuse of the jovial deity, continued to be written in the earlier portion of the last century, though by that time their character had changed.

The art of verse-writing was held in the highest esteem at Eton, and was, together with accurate prosody, the road to distinction. False quantities were considered crimes. In the *Etonian*

Praed had some clever lines as to this in his poem,
 "The Eve of Battle":—

And still in spite of all thy care,
 False quantities will haunt thee there,
 For thou wilt make amidst the throng
 Or ζῶή short or κλέος long.

A copy of Bacchus verses composed by Porson on the subject of Cyrus exulting over captive Babylon is preserved in the library. Pepys noted these Bacchus verses in 1666:—

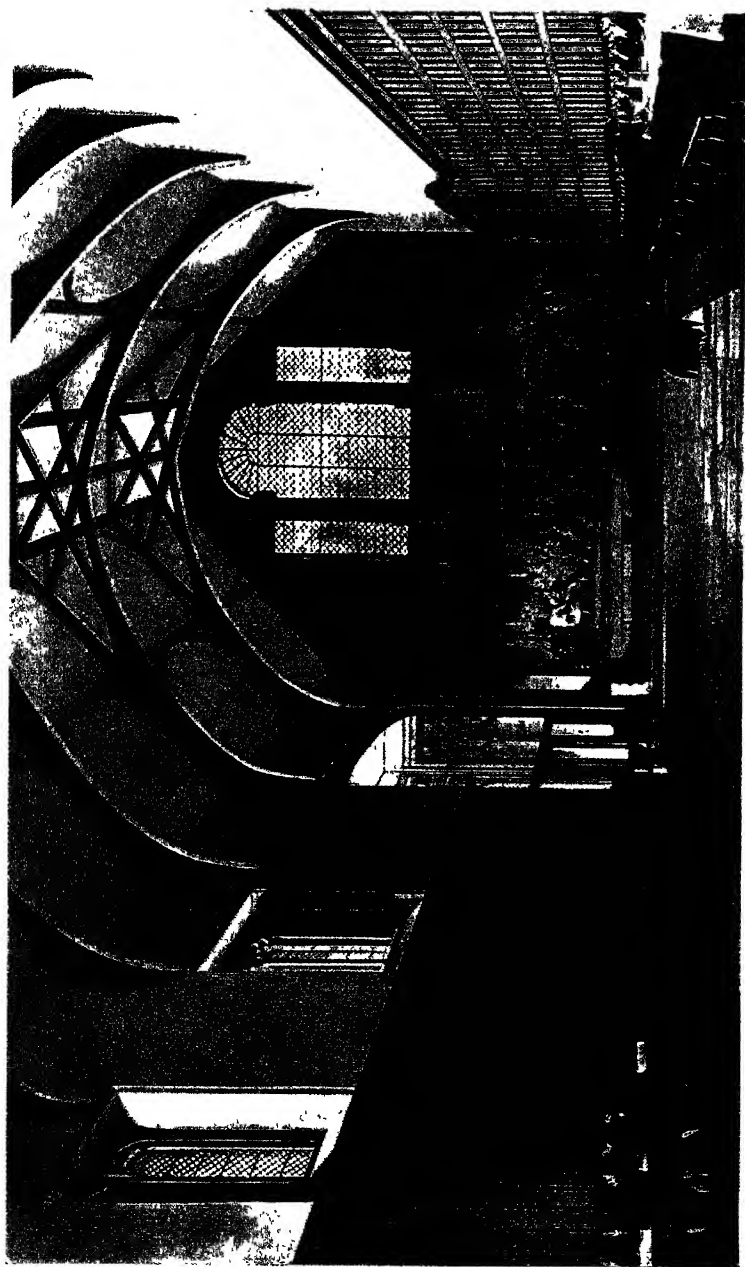
To the Hall, and there find the boys' verses, "De Peste," it being their custom to make verses at Shrovetide. I read several, and very good they were, better, I think, than ever I made when I was a boy, and in rolls as long, or longer, than the whole Hall by much. Here is a picture of Venice hung up, and a monument made by Sir H. Wotton's giving it to the College.

This picture was moved many years ago, and now hangs in Election Hall. Beneath it is the following inscription:—

Henricus Wottonius post tres apud Venetos Legationes ordinarias in Etonensis Collegii beato sinu senescens, eiusque cum suavissima inter Se Sociosque concordia annos iam XII. Praefectus Hanc miram Urbis quasi natantis effigiem in aliquam sui memoriam iuxta Socialem Mensam affixit, 1636.

On the picture itself may be seen the words, "Opus Odoardus Fialettus, 1611."

Near the oriel window there still stands the iron reading-desk from which in old times a scholar used to read out passages of Holy Writ. In early days he appears to have been known as "the Bibler."



'The College Hall before Restoration
From an old print

Before the restoration of the Hall two pieces of tapestry given by a Fellow—Adam Robyns—in 1613 used to be hung beneath the west window at Election time. They represented the flight into Egypt and Christ teaching in the Temple. When the Hall had been restored and the ornate modern panelling or screen set up where this tapestry used to hang, it was relegated to the bake-house. This was burnt in 1875, and the tapestry, together with the green rugs given to the Collegers by the Duke of Cumberland in 1735, were utterly destroyed in the conflagration. These rugs or coverlets were edged with gold braid and embroidered with the College arms.

Up to the period of the modern alterations the Hall was warmed by a circular charcoal brazier standing beneath the louvre or opening in the roof. In 1858, however, the three large fireplaces discovered behind the panelling were taken into use; they had never had chimneys before. Hot-water pipes now also assist to warm the Hall.

On the walls hang some eighteen portraits, all of Collegers except two, representing George III. and Sir Thomas Smith. The Rev. John Wilder, the well-meaning Fellow who spent such large sums of money in altering and restoring Hall and Chapel, is commemorated by a brass in the south-west corner.

On the right in the Hall is a small table called the "Servitor's Desk." The duty attached to the old office of Servitor consists in noting down in a

book the commons allowed for each day's dinner according to the number actually dining in Hall. He counts by "messes" and "half-messes," a mess consisting of four boys. It is the practice of most Servitors to carve their name on the desk, and among the names carved are those of A. C. Benson, author and poet, and J. K. Stephen.

A few of the old customs are retained, the authorities still sitting at the high table at the west end. The Sixth Form sit at the first table on the left side, carving their own joint; one of them says Grace, shouting "Surgite! Benedicat Deus" at the beginning of the meal, and "Surgite! Benedicatur Deo" at the end, when the others reply, "Deo Gratias." On Sundays a Latin Grace is chanted. The fare of Collegers formerly consisted almost¹ exclusively of mutton, from which arose the term "Tug-mutton," and "Tug" applied to a King's scholar.

Within the last three decades three ancient usages have been abandoned. The first of these was "Bever," which was abolished in 1890. "Bever" consisted in a modest collation of bread and salt and beer in "after fours" in the summer; Collegers might partake of this if they wished, and were allowed to invite guests. A second old usage which disappeared about the same time was that of certain boys receiving a double allowance of bread. Though most of the old oak panelling of Hall was replaced by new in 1858, amongst the old panels

¹ See page 204.

was one which for more than three hundred years had proclaimed the privilege of the mess of four boys which dined nearest to the door on the north side of the Hall, "Queen Elizabeth ad nos gave October x 2 loves in a mes 1596," being roughly inscribed upon it. Commemorating the munificence of the virgin Queen for more than three hundred years, two loaves, instead of the customary one loaf, were set before the four boys sitting near the panel. This practice has now been ended. The third old custom was of a far less pleasant character, and its disappearance is not to be deplored. Formerly, after the Collegers had dined, a number of old almswomen were allowed to collect the remains, and in consequence the Hall was at certain times thronged with a mass of old women thrusting chunks of bread and scraps of broken meat into bags. The whole thing was a somewhat unseemly scramble. The boys were often not very well disposed to the harpies, as they called the old ladies, and would wickedly make them what were known as "hag-traps" and "harpy-pies." The composition of these was a masterpiece of diabolical ingenuity. A large square piece of bread or quarter loaf having had its centre hollowed out by means of a hole in the side, the interior was cunningly filled with an unsavoury mixture of mustard, pepper, cayenne, and whatever else came to hand, after which the opening was cleverly closed so that the bread might present a totally unsuspecting appearance and then left lying about

amongst genuine loaves. Though the old ladies had considerable experience of various disagreeable forms of College humour, this wicked device always secured a certain amount of success. At the present time the female pensioners are given a small monetary allowance in place of being allowed to enter the Hall.

The Upper School occupies the whole of the west side of the school-yard, with the exception of the space covered by the headmaster's room at the north end. It was originally built by Provost Allestree, but so faultily that it had to be rebuilt under his successor, Provost Cradock, in 1694. Though by some attributed to him, the architect was probably not Sir Christopher Wren; yet the style adopted, very different from that of the other buildings in the school-yard, is that associated with his name. Though now only rarely used, Upper School was formerly the principal class-room of Eton, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century no less than 400 boys were taught there at the same time. The ground floor beneath is now occupied by rooms which in the last century were considered quite good enough to accommodate large "divisions," but have now been turned into a "school office," a porter's lodge, and store-rooms of various kinds. On the floor above is the "Upper School" itself, approached at the south end by a fine staircase—a well-proportioned room, lined with oak panelling which has served for the recording of many Eton names, and

adorned with the busts of Etonians who have served their country. The first of these busts was put up in 1840, when the Marquess Wellesley presented his to the school—his brother, the Duke of Wellington, shortly afterwards following his example. Most of the great Etonians are here, including Shelley. It is said that when the idea of erecting the poet's bust was first mooted, Dr. Hornby objected, saying that Shelley was a bad man, and he only wished he had been educated at Harrow. The memory of this poet—in former days, at least—was not held in any particular respect by the vast majority of Etonians, most of whom held much the same views about him as have been attributed to Dr. Hornby.

Some thirty years ago, when the subject of the amenities of Eton was being discussed by a House Debating Society, an Upper boy—now a well-known Peer—brought the debate to a close with a breezy speech. Eton, he said, was in his opinion a very good place; all boys were happy there, or ought to be. As far as he could make out, all boys always had been happy there, and he had only heard of one who wasn't, and that was "a boy called Shelley, who was a mad fool." He then sat down amidst applause.

An immense quantity of names are cut on the woodwork of Upper School. Most of these are those of boys who became famous in after life. The name of Charles James Fox, for instance, is to be seen beneath his bust. Gladstone's may

easily be recognised among a number of other names of the same family by the fact that there was not sufficient room left for the whole name, and consequently the last three letters are cut much smaller than the rest. Lord Roberts's name is on the large south door, and Shelley's under Lord Wellesley's bust, to the right, and again high up, to the left, beneath his own bust. Gladstone's name, it should be added, is on the upper right-hand panel of the door which stands to the left as you face the Headmaster's desk in the Upper School. His sons have their names cut on the same door close by. This carving was not done by Gladstone himself, but by Dr. Keate's servant in requital for a fee. Originally boys, before leaving, cut their names where they liked in Upper School. Later on, as in the writer's time, it was the custom on leaving to present the Headmaster's servant with a guinea to have this done. The present practice seems to be that for half a guinea a specially appointed official cuts a boy's name. Close to Upper School, on the top of the staircase leading to the Headmaster's room, may be seen the name Lord Dalmeny cut twice on the left, opposite the door; the older is that of Lord Rosebery, the newer that of his son.

The original Eton schoolroom was the present Lower School, which happily remains practically in its original state. The exact date of its erection is uncertain, but it would appear to have been built somewhere about the end of the fourteenth century.

According to an old tradition Lower School was once the College stables, and it was Sir Henry Wotton who, when Provost, fitted it up with pillars, on which he is supposed to have painted pictures of Greek and Roman authors for the instruction of the boys. This quaint old room was formerly open for its full length, and looked very picturesque with its double row of oaken pillars supporting the floor of the chamber above, and deeply recessed windows, the oaken shutters, as well as the pillars, graven with the names of former Etonians. For two centuries it was the only schoolroom. In recent times, for convenience of teaching, it has been turned into three rooms by means of deal partitions. These, however, being merely temporary erections, have not injured the ancient fabric of the room. Many generations of boys have amused themselves by poking pens and knives into the deep chinks of the pillars and spearing out bits of paper that had been thrust in there by boys of bygone times. Mr. Brinsley Richards has described how, as a boy at Eton, he extracted the fragment of a play-bill, issued by a strolling troupe who performed at Windsor Fair in 1769. In the writer's day many a boy, unconsciously imbued with that love of sending messages to posterity which is such a characteristic of youth, would write his name upon a scrap of paper and poke it deep into a hole or cranny.

Numerous names carved on the shutters and pillars of this room are striking links with the

remote past. The names in question, it would appear, are in the vast majority of instances those of Collegers elected from Eton to King's. They begin on the westernmost window on the north side, the earliest name discoverable being that of Kemp, 1577, somewhere about the middle of the shutter. On the first shutter on the left-hand side of the third room is the mark of a name which has been erased. This is supposed to have been that of Greenhall, who, leaving King's College, became a highwayman and was captured, hanged, and dissected.

Samuel Pepys, who visited Eton in 1666, was very pleased with Lower School. This favourable impression is recorded in his diary :—

All mighty fine. The School good, and the custom pretty of boys cutting their names in the shuts of the window when they go to Cambridge, by which many a one hath lived to see himself a Provost and Fellow, that hath his name in the window standing.

Over Lower School was the ancient "Long Chamber," now turned into the junior Collegers' dormitory. It once extended the whole length of the school-yard, with the exception of the space occupied by the Headmaster's chamber at the west end, and that of the Lower Master at the east. Its length was considerably lessened in 1844, and since that time it has been divided by partitions into "stalls" or "cubicles," so that little of the original appearance of the interior remains.

When Long Chamber was broken up into

cubicles, old Plumtre, one of the Fellows, preached a sermon on the text, "And Elisha said, Let every man take unto himself a beam, for the place we have made is too strait for us." Plumtre was a staunch old Tory, who hated the Reform Bill. For one whole night he walked round and round the Eton cloisters, praying and waiting for the expected news of its defeat.

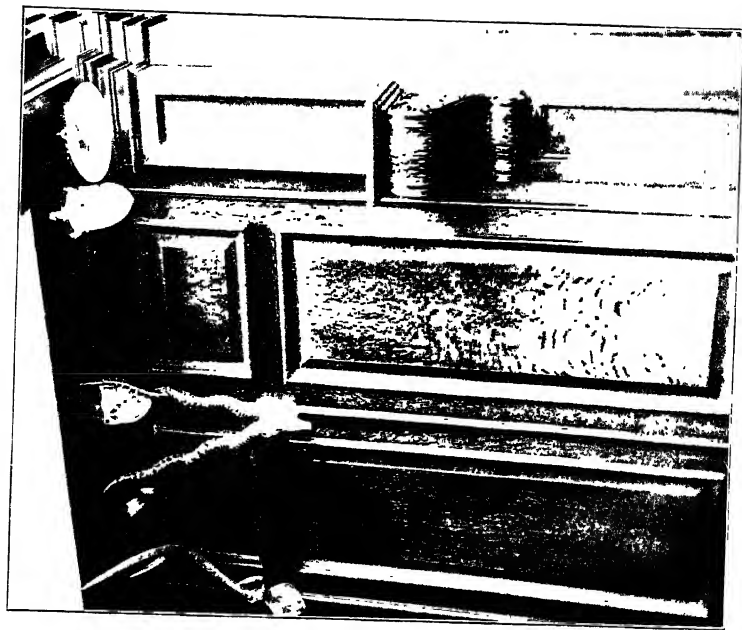
The Eton College Chapel was built in 1441, the foundation-stone being laid by King Henry VI. in person on Passion Sunday of that year. It was finished by Waynflete, who was Eton's benefactor till his death in 1484. Owing no doubt to lack of means, the latter curtailed the original design, which provided for a nave 168 feet long stretching down what is now Keate's Lane and finished the building with the Ante-Chapel, which still remains. A wooden rood-loft was erected over the chancel arch, with a crucifix between wooden figures of St. Mary and St. John, whilst stalls and frescoes, ordered to be wiped out in 1560, completed an interior which must have been beautiful and picturesque. Lupton's Chapel, in which is Provost Lupton's brass, was built by him in 1515. Here is now the tablet giving the names of those who fell in the South African War.

At the time of the Reformation there was naturally a good deal of iconoclastic destruction, and at the end of the seventeenth century the Chapel had suffered severely from dilapidation and neglect. In 1699-1700, under Provost Godolphin,

however, a general remodelling of the Chapel had been undertaken, it would seem probable, under the direction of Wren. In the course of the alterations the floor would appear to have been raised, whilst the walls were covered nearly up to the windows with panelling of simple though good design. A classical organ-loft with fine decorative carving was at that time placed across the choir near the second window from the west end.

During the eighteenth century the interior of the Eton Chapel evoked nothing but praise, but with the mania for restoration which characterised the Victorian era, some desire for drastic alterations began to make itself felt. Whilst the general appearance of the Chapel was dignified and stately, there were undoubtedly certain disfigurements, the chief amongst them two great box-like pews at the east end, specially allotted to the male and female College servants. An elaborate altar-piece of inlaid wood, entirely concealing the east end, though good of its kind, was somewhat heavy and out of place. Good or bad, however, all the woodwork was soon to disappear.

In 1842, when the so-called Gothic revival first began to sweep over England, destroying much worthy to be preserved and creating comparatively little of artistic merit, it was determined to restore the Chapel. At first this was limited to tearing down the classical altar-piece, pews, and panelling at the east end and erecting ponderous



Old Oak Panelling formerly in Eton Chapel, now in Entrance Hall of Frampton Court, Dorset

so-called Gothic altar rails, pulpit, and the like, all of stone. These, however, were discarded a few years later, when, in 1847, a regular scheme of destruction and innovation was undertaken by Deeson, one of whose chief artistic crimes was tearing down the noblemen's stalls, then standing against the walls at the western end. Up to the so-called restoration of 1847, boys who were noblemen or baronets used to occupy special seats of honour ranged along the Chapel walls. When one of these privileged youths—known as “Nobs”—first took his seat in one of these stalls he would, according to immemorial custom, distribute amongst his neighbours small packets of almonds and raisins, called “Chapel sock,” which were eaten in the Chapel itself. These seats, finely designed with carving at the top, were ruthlessly torn down, whilst no exact record of their appearance was preserved. A considerable portion of the panelling, which formerly covered the east end, adorns the hall at Frampton Park, Dorchester, but the writer has been unable to trace the noblemen's seats which were swept away to make room for the present stalls.

The behaviour of the College authorities in having discarded work of high artistic interest, probably designed by Wren, is much to be deplored. The evidence as to Wren having designed the panelling is not absolutely conclusive, but much leads one to think that he was concerned in its design. The Mr. Banks, “surveyor,” whose name

has been preserved as the designer of the costly woodwork, is probably identical with Matthew Bankes, "master carpenter," who, under Wren's direction, carried out the interior decoration and fitting of Kensington Palace, Hampton Court, and other historical buildings.

The huge organ-loft, about twenty-five feet in depth, was approached by a flight of steps, which Provost Godolphin placed across the church within the choir. This loft or screen was a very fine piece of work, with fluted columns of oak, two of which are preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and elaborate carving, by Grinling Gibbons, much resembling the one which still remains at Trinity College, Cambridge. The organ-case, which, curiously enough, has hitherto escaped all detailed notice in books about Eton, was of oak, and consisted of four towers and three flats of pipes—the pipe shades, lower frieze scrolls, side brackets and centre shield of arms being beautifully carved and well designed, while characteristically English in style. Above was a scroll ending in a point, for the carving of which Bird (who executed much fine woodwork under the direction of Sir Christopher Wren) was paid £24 in 1703. The organ itself, built by either William Smith or Father Smith, was erected in 1700, and cost a large sum of money for that day. This organ and its beautiful case is specially mentioned in *Organ-Cases and Organs of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, the erudite and



Carved and Decorated Organ Case formerly in Eton Chapel
*Specially photographed for this work with the kind permission of the Very Rev. Felix Couturier,
Prior of the Dominican Monastery of St. Thomas, Rugseley*

artistic work written and illustrated by the greatest English authority on the subject, Mr. A. G. Hill, who speaks of the old Eton College organ as being perhaps the best of all similar organs still remaining in England. It may be mentioned that the example formerly at Whitehall, and now in St. Peter's Church at the Tower of London, much resembles it. After the Eton Chapel restoration of 1844-1847 this old organ, with its beautiful case, was discarded in order to make way for a new one which was placed half-way up the choir on the south side. No one seems to have thought the old organ worth preserving, and the case was eventually found by a member of the famous organ-building firm of Hill, lying about in bits in the yard of those who had taken it down. Mr. Hill at once recognised the high artistic value of the magnificent woodwork, and, after the various portions of the case had been fitted together, adapted it to a new organ, which passed into the possession of the late Mr. Josiah Spode, of Hawkesyard Park, Rugeley, who put it up in his hall. Mr. Spode left his property to his niece, with a proviso that at her death a certain portion should be applied to founding a monastery. This lady, however, preferred to carry out this wish during her own lifetime, and, expending a far larger sum than was stipulated by the will, founded at Rugeley the Dominican Monastery of St. Thomas, in the beautiful chapel of which the old Eton organ-case was put up.

In connection with its history it is curious to recall that this splendid specimen of Jacobean woodwork was thrown out of the Eton Chapel because it was supposed to be "out of place" in a Gothic building. The Chapel at Rugeley is a singularly successful example of modern Gothic at its best, and the organ-case accords perfectly with its surroundings. A feature of the old case, adorned with scrolls and carvings lovingly wrought by the hand of a master craftsman of a past age, is its heraldic embellishment, the ornamentation including three shields bearing coats of arms. The large central, one at the top shows the Royal arms of England, enriched by the legend "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" The smaller left-hand shield in the hands of an angel at the bottom of the case bears the familiar arms of Eton, whilst another on the right-hand side shows those of the sister foundation of King's.

After the Eton authorities had cleared their Chapel of all the old Jacobean woodwork, they turned their attention to the roof, it being at first proposed to construct a new one of stone. Happily, however, fear of the Chapel collapsing checked such a scheme, and the architect, Deeson, merely stripped the paint and plaster from the roof, whilst adding some pseudo-Gothic cusping.

The interior of the Chapel as it appeared before 1700 in no wise resembled that which we at present see. Mural monuments abounded about the

chancel; these, after being concealed by the wainscoting put up in 1700, were ruthlessly torn from their places by those responsible for the restoration of 1847. Some of them are in the Ante-Chapel, others were totally swept away. In the original Chapel there were probably only benches at the east end, whilst low wooden stalls with miserere seats occupied the place of the present seats crowned by canopies. The only remnants of the ancient woodwork appear to be some old wooden forms in the Ante-Chapel, on which boys now leave their hats. It is recorded that in 1625 Thomas Weaver, a "Fellow," gave "four strong forms to stand in the aisles of the Church for the townsmen to sit on." The seats in question, it should be added, seem originally to have been intended for the townspeople of Eton, who then attended the Chapel as their parish church.

Above the low stalls were paintings, and these in 1560 the College barber was ordered to wash out; his account for the work (6s. 8d.) is still extant. The barber, however, merely covered up the designs with white paint or whitewash, and when the fine old stalls were removed the paintings could be clearly seen upon the wall behind. In 1847, however, in order to produce a surface capable of showing up the canopies of the new stalls then in course of erection, the workmen proceeded to scrape out all trace of the ancient designs, and they had already finished this work of destruction

at the top of the walls beneath the string-courses when a Fellow of the College, chancing to stroll in to inspect the work, saved the rest, some of which still remains behind the modern panelling, of which the Eton authorities have certainly very little reason to be proud. After the discovery there was for a time some idea of leaving the paintings exposed to view, or at least contriving an arrangement of sliding panels. Provost Hodgson, however, objected to them as being "superstitious," and they were consequently permanently covered by the present panelling. The designs, which were fortunately sketched before being covered up, have been described as the finest of the kind ever discovered in England. They were in all probability the work of some Florentine artist of the fifteenth century. Each row of paintings was divided longitudinally into seventeen compartments, alternately wide and narrow. Concerning these Sir Maxwell Lyte, in his excellent history of the College, writes :—

The former contained historical compositions, the latter single figures of Saints represented as standing in canopied niches. Most of these Saints may be identified by their emblems. Under each of the large compartments there was a Latin inscription, explaining the subject of the picture, and giving a reference to the book whence its story was derived. The works most frequently quoted were the *Legenda Sanctorum* and Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum Historiale*, one of the earliest productions of the printing-press, which had already gone through three editions before 1479. According to a practice which prevailed extensively in the fifteenth century, successive incidents of a story were

often represented as forming only one scene, the same figure appearing two or three times in different combinations. The whole series was intended to exemplify the gracious protection afforded by the Blessed Virgin, the Patroness of the College, to her votaries in all ages and countries. No less than six of the compartments were occupied by scenes from the life of a mythical Roman Empress.

From first to last the so-called restoration cost over £20,000, £5000 of which was contributed by Mr. Wilder. In reality it was no restoration at all—merely a terrible act of vandalism, only exceeded in lack of taste by the alterations carried out at the sister college of Winchester some thirty years later, when all the priceless woodwork was removed from the chapel. Within recent years this was sold for an enormous sum, and is now at Hursley Park, not many miles away from the College which it once adorned.

Besides the tearing down of the fine old paneling and the partial destruction of ancient frescoes, in all probability a quantity of other interesting old work was destroyed at the orgy of iconoclasm in 1847. The only object of those in power at Eton at that time seems to have been to destroy everything which recalled the past. They gloried in the havoc they wrought within the Chapel, and in their “restoring fervour” actually went so far as to tear up the black and white marble pavement. It is to be hoped that some day this may be replaced. Would that some portion of the fine old woodwork might be recovered and once again find a place in the sacred edifice where for close

upon a hundred and fifty years it met the eyes of generations of Etonians !

In place of the stately old noblemen's seats put up in 1700, Deeson designed seventy oak stalls with carved canopies of modern Gothic design. Each canopy seems to have cost £42, which, considering that the artistic value of the stalls is exactly nil, is a large sum. It would be interesting to know what the value of the noblemen's stalls which Deeson tore down would be at the present time !

Entering the Chapel through the screen, the first of the canopied stalls on the right is that occupied by the Provost, that on the left by the Vice-Provost. The second stall on the right was given by the Fellows of King's College, the third by Winchester College, and the fourth by the President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford, like Eton connected with the memory of Waynflete. The Headmaster's stall is the seventeenth on the right, distinguished by the words *Magister Informator*. Exactly opposite is the seat of the Lower master (*Ostiarius*), who, however, usually attends Lower Chapel. A number of the stalls given by Etonians or Etonian families have tablets with inscriptions. Next but two to the Lower master, for instance, is a stall given by the Cust family, of whom some eight generations have been educated at Eton. Beneath the seat is to be found the genealogy of all the Custs who have been at the school. The twenty-sixth stall on either side are those of the chaplains (*Capellani*

Conductitii), known as "Conducts" at Eton. The last stall but one on the left was given by James Rattee, the contractor for the stalls, and the one opposite by Deeson, the architect, who no doubt thought that his imitation Gothic was vastly superior to the stately work which he treated with such contempt.

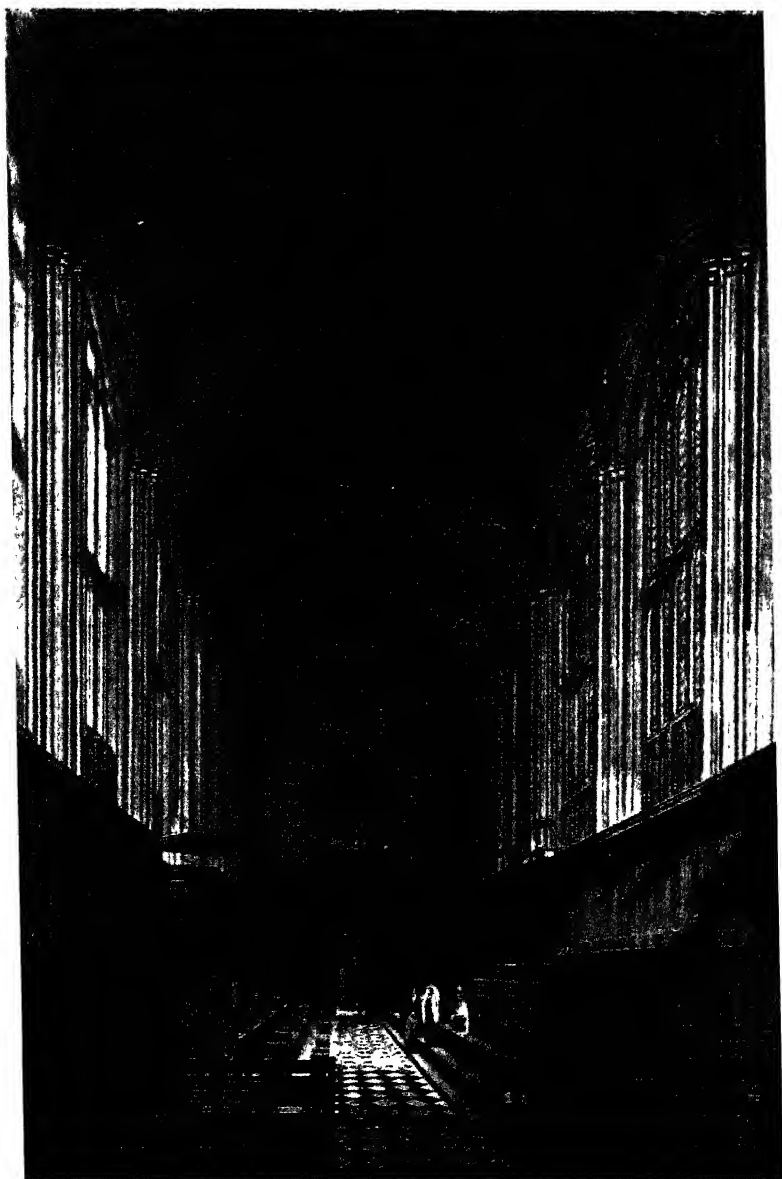
Most of the alterations in the Eton Chapel were lamentable in the extreme. Nevertheless they excited great admiration amongst many who had sat there in its unrestored days. Apparently they were quite satisfied that the fine old panelling, in all probability designed by Wren, should be removed. One of these lovers of novelty wrote: "Those who only know the Chapel in its present nobly restored state could with difficulty go back to the simply glazed windows, bare walls, and cold cheerless aspect of the whole interior in former times."¹ How such a "noble restoration" (consisting in the destruction of every vestige of ancient woodwork in order to substitute a quantity of machine-made-looking Gothic stalls and some poor cusping to the roof) can have moved any one to enthusiasm it is almost impossible to understand. Nor can the crudely coloured stained-glass windows be said to be a great improvement upon the old plain glass, which at least caused no pain to the eye.

The true and artistic restoration would have been to have retained the old stalls against the western walls, while contriving a method by which

¹ Mr. Tucker in *Eton of Old*.

portions of it could be temporarily removed in order to afford a view of the frescoes. The high box-like pews might have been modified, the old woodwork being utilised to the utmost extent, or at least preserved for use in other parts of the College. If the position of the stately old organ-loft opposite the second window of the west end was found to be absolutely unsuited to modern requirements, together with its wooden pilasters of admirable design, it might have been re-erected at the junction of the choir with the Ante-Chapel, the stalls being continued farther back. As for the magnificent organ-case, there would have been no difficulty, as has been proved at Rugeley, about furnishing it with a modern interior and new pipes. The roof should have merely been freed from paint, etc., and not been adorned with the meaningless cusping, which, never contemplated by its original designer, is so obviously out of place.

The present organ-screen, erected in 1882 by Mr. G. E. Street in memory of Etonians who fell in the Zulu, Afghan, and Boer wars of 1879, 1880, and 1881, cannot be called a masterpiece of architectural design, but in certain other respects the interior of the Chapel has been somewhat improved within recent years. An elaborately designed floor of black and white marble has been laid down at the east end. This, together with a handsome if not altogether appropriate altar, forms part of the memorial to the Etonians who fell in the South African War (1899-1902).



The Chapel before Restoration
Engraved by D. Havell after E. Mackenzie

As stated before, the names of those who died for their country in this deplorable contest are inscribed upon a roll of honour in Lupton Chapel.

The fine tapestry behind the altar, executed by the firm of William Morris from the designs of the late Sir Edward Burne-Jones, was presented by an art-loving Eton Master, Mr. H. E. Luxmoore, in 1895, whilst the picture of Sir Galahad, hanging on the western wall, was presented by its painter, Watts.

The great stained-glass east window—a source of grumbling and discontent to several generations of Etonians, who were obliged to contribute what was known as “window-money”—was executed by Willement between 1844 and 1849, being set up in bits as the contributions wrung from the boys increased. Within recent years the crude and violent tints of this costly example of the work of a bad period have been softened. The irregular curve of the external arch-mould over this window is said to be due to the circumstance that when the College Chapel was built the stones of the Parish Church (which stood in the present graveyard and was built in 1441) were used over again.

If the great east window is now somewhat less of a “transparent failure” than of yore, the other windows on the north and south sides of the Chapel remain specimens of bad design and colour. Those in the Ante-Chapel, however, are less glaring. The two large windows by Hardman on the north and south form the memorial to Etonians who fell in

the Crimea; those at the west end are personal memorials. Below these windows are a number of tablets commemorating Etonians of note. On the floor of the Ante-Chapel is a fine slab to the memory of the late Bishop Abraham. There is also a marble statue of the Founder, by Durham, and another of Provost Goodall, who in all probability would have been appalled by the changes of 1847.

The Rev. John Wilder, whose munificence served to modernise the College Chapel he had known all his life, is also here commemorated by a tablet. Besides giving £5000 to the restoration fund, he presented fourteen stained-glass windows in the choir, and decorated the reredos and east end as well as the new organ and case. Though his benefactions were animated by a generous and unselfish spirit, it is much to be regretted that he did not devote his money to some better purpose.

In the Ante-Chapel, behind a railing, is a font, placed there at the time of the renovations sixty years ago. It was presented by some Collegers as a memorial to C. J. Abraham. The last baptism for which it was used took place two or three years ago, when an Eton boy of fourteen or fifteen was christened in the Chapel. About to be confirmed, it was discovered that he had never been baptized. In all probability he was a foreigner. There stood previously at the same place an older font, of which there is mention as early as 1479.

Lipscomb describes the earlier one as "a beautiful ancient font of white marble, of an octagon shape, elegantly carved in relief and supported by a pedestal on a square plinth." It would be interesting to know what has become of this font. If not broken up, it has probably been sent away to some village church.

In the Ante-Chapel, before the Reformation, there existed four altars, the chief of which, still marked by a row of niches, was in the south-eastern corner behind where now stands the statue of Provost Goodall. This was called the Altar of St. Catherine, or sometimes the Altar of Thomas Jourdelay, after a certain inhabitant of Eton who lies buried near it. Provost Bost (1477-1504) left a sum of money for an extra chaplain who should say Mass at this altar at least three times a week for him and his relations. The altar in the north-eastern corner of the Ante-Chapel was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. The remaining two were on either side of the entrance to the choir and were dedicated to St. Nicholas and St. Peter.

One of the few relics which the spirit of change has left intact in this old Chapel is the lectern, which within recent years has once more been taken into use. It dates from the fifteenth century, and escaped destruction by the Puritans in 1651, when the College paid sixpence for its removal. A considerable number of Etonians are fittingly commemorated in the Chapel, but the Marquis Wellesley, in all probability the greatest lover

of Eton who ever lived, has his memorial in the North Porch, where may be seen the Latin elegiacs which he wrote as his own epitaph. The tablet on which they are inscribed was erected by his brother, the great Duke. A good rendering in English verse was made by Lord Derby :—

Long tost on Fortune's waves, I come to rest,
Eton, once more on thy maternal breast.
On loftiest deeds to fix the aspiring gaze,
To seek the purer lights of ancient days,
To love the simple paths of manly truth,—
These were the lessons of my opening youth.
If on my later life some glory shine,
Some honours grace my name, the meed is thine.
My boyhood's nurse, my aged dust receive,
And one last tear of kind remembrance give !

Lord Wellesley was deeply attached to his old school, and some of the last productions of his pen were dedicated to Eton. Consequently it was only fitting that when he died, in testimony of the strong affection which he entertained towards the place where he received his first impressions of literary taste, and in accordance with his desire expressed before his death, his body should be laid to rest beneath the College Chapel of Eton—that spot of earth which, through a long and arduous life in many lands, was ever the nearest and dearest to his heart. The new Lower Chapel, built 1889-1891, also contains a memorial to Lord Wellesley in a stained-glass window, the gift of the late Mr. A. Montgomery, who was once his private secretary.

Two Eton Headmasters are commemorated by

monuments on the right towards the eastern end of the Chapel. These are Dr. Balston and Dr. Hawtrey, the last person to be buried within the Chapel walls. On his breast is a badge with the arms of Scotland and the motto *Nemo me impune lacessit* just showing. This badge recalls an old Eton usage¹ now extinct. The most modern monument is a statue of Henry VI., put up over the north door to the memory of the late Mr. J. P. Carter, for many years one of the Assistant Masters.

In 1876, owing to much of the Headington stone used by Waynflete having become decayed, the whole of the exterior of the Ante-Chapel was entirely refaced.² This, with other restorations, of necessity impaired a good deal of its ancient charm. On the whole the renovation was carried out with care, but it is to be regretted that the old pinnacles were then entirely removed and new ones (designed in a highly ornate style of Gothic for which there is no authority³) erected under the direction of Mr. Woodyer. The old pinnacles had last been repaired in 1698-1699. A curious circumstance connected with them is that during their removal fragments of the ancient reredos—destroyed in 1546-1548—were discovered to have been built into their fabric. Whatever may

¹ See pages 38-40.

² See page 5.

³ See *The Architectural History of the University of Cambridge and of the Colleges of Cambridge and Eton*, by the late Robert Willis, M.A., F.R.S., edited and brought up to date by the late John Willis Clark, M.A., Cambridge, at the University Press, 1886.

have been the demerits of the old pinnacles, one or two of them which had suffered least from the hands of time should have been allowed to remain in place, so that future generations might realise the original design which modern taste, or lack of taste, has chosen to discard.

One of the most interesting architectural features of the College Chapel is the ancient holy water stoup on the right-hand side of the door of the south porch. As may be seen in old prints, the service bell was formerly in a sort of dove-cot (irreverently called by some a larder) placed on the roof of the porch. Here also hung the knell bell, which, as long as the College Chapel remained the Eton Parish Church, was tolled for all funerals. The service bell still in use, hanging in the turret at the south-western angle, bears the inscription "Prayes Ye Lord, 1637."

In a niche on the west wall of the Ante-Chapel, facing the street, a statue of William Waynflete was placed in 1893. This was subscribed for by some old Etonians connected with Sussex. The task of designing it was entrusted to Sir Arthur Blomfield, who produced one of the very few bits of commendable modern work in Eton. Indeed, this little statue, beneath an elaborate canopy, may be called the only real artistic improvement carried out within the last seventy years, during which time so much labour and money have been devoted to what in some cases amounts to mere wanton destruction. Of the new quadrangle and Lower

Chapel, built by Sir Arthur Blomfield 1889-1891, little need here be said. On the whole, the architect has done his work well, and no doubt, under the mellowing influence of time, the Queen's schools will assume something of that picturesque aspect which in some slight degree already pertains to the New Schools completed by Mr. Woodyer in 1863.

A full account of the new Lower Chapel, its memorials and stained-glass windows, is to be found in the admirable *Illustrated Guide to Eton College* written by Mr. R. A. Austen Leigh, who in this and other works has done much which should gain for him the thanks of all Etonians. Since the construction of the New Schools, Upper School, which tradition has connected with the name of Wren, is only used as a schoolroom for one division for the purposes of examination. Speeches, I believe, are now to take place in the new Memorial Hall, and the busts of celebrated Etonians will no longer look down upon the visitors who flock to Eton on the 4th of June. The old staircase, from the colonnade to Upper School, is one of the most picturesque portions of the College. Here it was that in old days boys promoted from Lower to Upper School were subjected to the ordeal of "booking," being hit on the head with books as as they passed up the staircase.

Within the last fifty years the town of Eton has suffered severely from a picturesque point of

view owing to the demolition and alteration of many quaint old houses which formerly gave the place a charming old-world appearance. The "Old Sun," which was pulled down not very long ago, contained some fine arched oaken beams, and the laths were perpendicular and fastened with willow twigs. On the front wall used to be a Sun Insurance plate of the eighteenth century, one of the earliest issued by that Company.

In that part of Eton given up to houses for boys, alterations have of necessity been made in order to afford accommodation for increased numbers. Some of the older houses have had extra stories added, whilst entirely new ones have also been built. Of these latter somewhat "barracky" erections it is perhaps best not to speak.

With regard to the Eton Memorial, however, built for some unknown reason in the Renaissance style, the writer can only say that in his opinion a building less in keeping with the spirit of Eton it would have been impossible to erect. Why the authorities should have selected a design of this sort is difficult to understand. Surely some architect might have been found to produce a building which would have harmonised with the fine old brickwork which in the quadrangle and elsewhere produces such a charming effect? To intrude a purely personal opinion, those responsible for the maintenance of Eton School have within the last seventy years committed three great artistic

mistakes—the first, the indiscriminating restoration of the College Chapel, entailing the destruction of much admirable woodwork; the second, the renovation of the College Hall, in which it is admitted a number of interesting features were obliterated; the third, the erection of the huge Memorial, the whole aspect and style of which is utterly out of keeping with its surroundings.

Closely associated with Eton is the adjoining Royal Borough of Windsor, in which past generations of Etonians played so many wild pranks. The houses which formerly fringed the walls of the Castle have long disappeared, and on the other side of the road few ancient buildings remain. The queer old theatre and gabled buildings near “Damnation Corner” have been demolished within comparatively recent years. “Damnation Corner,” it is curious to recall, received its name from the fact that in the old “shirking” days it was extremely difficult for an Eton boy to avoid a master coming quickly round the corner.

During the last fifty years the whole appearance of Windsor Hill has been transformed, the hand of the restorer having not even spared the venerable curfew tower—now for some forty-eight years disfigured by a roof so monstrous in its ugliness that it stands forth as a surpassing and convincing proof of our national lack of artistic taste.

The hideous top, totally inappropriate in style, was put up by Salvin in 1863, when the ancient

bell tower of picturesque and suitable appearance was demolished. The operations carried out at that date were, of course, dignified by the name of "restoration"; as a matter of fact the unwieldy addition to the tower had not a vestige of archæological authority. It is much to be hoped that some day the ancient appearance of the tower will be restored, for the huge, ugly, and inappropriate slated roof constitutes an eyesore from almost every point of vantage from which the Castle can be viewed. Within quite recent years there could be seen, looming through an embrasure, the muzzle of an old cannon, which, according to a local legend, had been placed there by Cromwell in order to guard against any hostile move from the direction of Eton. During a recent visit to Windsor the writer was quite unable to locate either cannon or embrasure; presumably both have gone. This old curfew tower—the oldest part of the Castle, and said to have been built in the days of the Conqueror himself—has been peculiarly unfortunate. When Salvin constructed his abominable top he had the decency to leave the rest of the external structure alone, and in the writer's Eton days, thirty years ago, almost all the old stonework and quaint little windows, cunningly contrived for bowmen to shoot through, remained as they had been built. Since then there have been two or three reparations; no doubt the decay of the stone made some renovations necessary. In the last of these, however,

during which the whole of the exterior was refaced with an entirely different kind of stone, the original design of the tower, which, like all the work of the Normans, was very simple, has been tampered with, the result being that its ancient charm has been completely impaired. So is it that in this country, in spite of much meaningless gush and prattle of education and appreciation of art, almost every fine monument is by degrees vulgarised and destroyed. The curfew tower, it should be added, was one of the few parts of the Castle left untouched by George IV. in the very comprehensive remodeling of the whole stately pile by Wyattville.

VII

COLLEGE

TILL the carrying out of the reforms initiated by Provost Hodgson in 1844 the treatment of the King's scholars constituted little short of a public scandal, rendered the more iniquitous because College was the original Eton, and the lack of consideration and comfort shown to boys on the Foundation was directly contrary to the wishes of the Founder. No wonder was it that the number of those in College often fell far short of the appointed seventy, sometimes sinking as low as thirty-eight. In one year there were but six candidates for forty vacancies. The prospective advantages which a Colleger might reasonably expect at King's College, Cambridge, were not enough to counterbalance the discomfort and degradation of existence in the great dormitory known as "Long Chamber," besides which the expenses of a King's scholar were little less than those of the well-fed and comfortably housed Oppidan, the cost of education on the Eton Foundation often falling not very far short of a hundred a year—a most



A Collegier, 1816

extravagant outlay considering that a Colleger was cared for no better than a charity boy.

Glancing over the records of the treatment meted out to those whom Provost Hodgson rightly termed "these poor boys," one wonders that the masters, who were perfectly acquainted with the state of affairs in College, made practically no protest. It must be remembered, however, that at that time all of them without exception had been Collegers themselves, and having come through the ordeal with comparative immunity from harm, probably had some sort of idea that the hardships and discomforts of life in College produced hardy and successful men. What these hardships and discomforts were may be realised from the view taken by an Insurance Company as to chances of life of any one who had undergone them. In 1826 Dr. Okes, when applying for an insurance policy, in reply to one of the questions put to him stated that "he had slept in Long Chamber for eight years," on hearing which the chairman of the Board said, "We needn't ask Mr. Okes any more questions." Existence in the ill-kept and insanitary dormitory in question was calculated to promote only the survival of the fittest, and those who grew up to be healthy men might well be accounted "good lives."

Whilst, as has been said, little protest was ever raised at Eton itself against the deliberate misinterpretation of the statutes with respect to the scholars, public opinion gradually became aroused,

and many old Etonians, notwithstanding the intense *esprit de corps* which has always been a characteristic of the school, joined in the chorus of unanimous reprobation which demanded reform. About 1834 the Eton authorities were violating not only the spirit but the letter of the ancient statutes.

The statutes required that the fines and land-tax should be applied to the common use ("ad communem utilitatem"), instead of which they were appropriated by the Provost and Fellows to their own use.

The statutes entitled the Fellows to £10 a year stipend, and 2s. a week, or £5, 4s. a year, for commons, whereas they had increased their stipend to £50 a year, and received in lieu of commons on an average £550 a year each, or £10, 11s. 6d. per week instead of 2s.

The statutes entitled the Provost and seven Fellows to allowances amounting in all to £200 per annum, but in practice they received nearly £7000.

The statutes required that the scholars should be supplied with dress and bedding; with all, in fact, "*quae ad vestitum et lectisternia eorundem aliaque iis necessaria pertinent.*" Nevertheless, with the exception of a coarse gown, the scholars received nothing appertaining to dress from the funds of the College.

The statutes provided ample allowances for breakfast, dinner, and supper, with the use of

certain fisheries. In practice breakfast was omitted altogether, and for dinner the only kind of meat provided for the scholars throughout the year was mutton, which even if good in quality was not sufficient in quantity.

According to the statutes thirteen servitors were to wait upon the Provost, Fellows, and scholars in Hall, which arrangement had further developed into the Lower boys waiting upon the Upper, who in their turn performed the same menial offices for the Provost and his company on the occasions of their dining in the College Hall.

The statutes required that each scholar should be instructed free under the most strict oath to be taken by the Head and Lower Masters. In direct defiance of this each scholar was charged £6, 6s., the amount having been gradually increased to that sum.

The statutes allowed each Fellow a separate apartment, but such accommodation had long ceased to be sufficient for them, and instead they resided in spacious houses, free from taxes and the expense of repair, with stables and coach-houses attached.

The statutes enjoined that one room should be provided for every three boys, free from any expense. In 1834 upwards of forty boys slept in Long Chamber, whilst those who were lodged in the two adjoining rooms paid a sum of money annually to the second master.

The statute that any scholar during a short illness should be maintained at the College expense

(if longer than a month, to receive a sum of money) was entirely ignored.

Finally, the statutes were required to be read to the scholars assembled in a body three times a year. This was never done; the scholars, moreover, were not allowed access to them.

It should also be added that the statute which forbade Fellows of the College to hold benefices had long been treated with utter contempt, they holding them to any amount.

If, however, the Eton authorities had contented themselves with merely breaking the statutes in the way of malversation of funds and the like, no particular outcry would in all probability have arisen. It was Long Chamber, and the state of affairs within its walls, which excited such indignation amongst those who, denouncing it as a sort of Bastille, clamoured for reform. Originally all the seventy scholars seem to have slept in the long dormitory above Lower School, but after 1716 the number became limited to about fifty-two. In that year the Lower Master, Thomas Carter, having given up his two rooms at the east end, eighteen Collegers were located in the rooms in question, being henceforth known as Carter's Chamber and Lower Chamber.

Long Chamber, about 172 feet long and 15 feet high, was in winter warmed, or rather not warmed, by two fire-places which were put in in 1784; before that there were no fires at all. Along each wall was a range of old oaken bedsteads

which had been there for centuries, and between every bedstead a high desk, with a cupboard beneath, for each boy. The desk and cupboard, painted lead colour, contained all their belongings. There was no system of lighting except candles, to hold which no provision was made. The leaf of a book torn off, doubled, and a hole cut in the centre, formed the only candlestick which the Collegger had. If he wished to read in bed, the candle was removed from the pasteboard candlestick and stuck against the back of the old bedstead. Even if sleep overcame a boy reading in bed, and his candle burnt down to the wood, no harm came of it, the bedstead being well striped with charcoal, an evidence of the incombustible nature of the old oak. [After Long Chamber had been done away with, some little models of these ancient bedsteads were made out of wood black with age. The Rt. Hon. Lewis Harcourt's Eton collection contains one.] All that happened was that it would not be long before he would be awakened by the unpleasant smell of the wood, or by a good tweak of the nose from his next-door neighbour, who would be angry at the annoyance. In winter the boys shivered with cold, most of the glass in the windows being usually broken.

There were but a very few chairs for the Sixth Form, and the barrack or prison (boys were locked into it at 6.30 in the evening), with the exception of a table with a basin for the highest boys, was totally devoid of washstands, Colleggers having to

perform such ablutions as they might deem necessary at the old pump in the cloisters. The walls and ceiling were full of the grime of ages, whilst the whole place as a general rule was in a state of intolerable filth. Once a year, however, some attempt was made to give Long Chamber a habitable appearance, and the time-honoured processes to which it was then subjected were generally sufficiently successful in making visitors who saw it believe that all was well enough. For a week before Election Saturday, which took place at the end of July, "rug-riding" was in full force. A number of Lower boys were tied up in big rugs and dragged with a rope by other fags up and down Long Chamber till the floor shone like a mirror; the spaces between the beds were also scrubbed to a corresponding glossiness. On the Thursday, waggon-loads of beech boughs, cut in the College woods at Hedgerley and Burnham, were brought in and the whole of Long Chamber decorated; the green rugs, edged with gold and embroidered with the College arms, given by the Duke of Cumberland in 1735, were then spread on the beds. A huge flag was hung from the Captain's bed and the whole aspect of the room transformed. Nevertheless the dirt remained beneath.

Except at Election time Long Chamber was not accessible to visitors, and the King of Prussia himself was refused admission in 1842, on the plea that that portion of the College was never shown.



James Culliford, the last Chief Butler of College to wear the livery of Eton blue, standing by the College Pump

Reproduced by permission of the Earl of Rosebery, K.G.

Things in the two other rooms appropriated to the use of the King's scholars were not much better, and an extraordinary state of affairs prevailed in Carter's Chamber. Whenever the chimney there became at all foul, the boys used to set fire to it, and, being very large, the roar it made when blazing was tremendous, generally much to the annoyance of the Provost, part of whose lodge was close by. The fires in question were made with large beechen logs, placed upon iron dogs, and the Collegers used to roast potatoes among the ashes. One of these logs every Lower boy was compelled to saw up before he went to bed, with a saw that had no edge. This was one of the most unpleasant features of a Lower Colleger's existence, for the thinnest logs were always chosen by the biggest boys, leaving the heaviest for poor little fellows hardly strong enough to lift them. Not infrequently would the latter dock themselves of part of their rolls for breakfast in order to be able to bribe another stronger boy to saw up their portion for them.

As regards food, the old-time Colleger was disgracefully treated, no breakfast at all being provided for him in College. Dinner in Hall consisted entirely of mutton until about 1840, when Provost Hodgson added roast and boiled beef, each one day in the week. Though the mutton is said to have been of excellent quality, the manner in which it was served made it often impossible for a young boy who had not a robust

appetite to get any dinner at all that he could eat. The joints were served in messes, a leg or a shoulder serving for eight boys, a loin or neck for six, the best joints going to the elder boys. They were put upon the table, and the boys carved for themselves. The captain of the joint cut his own portion liberally from the best part, and passed it on to the next in seniority, who slashed away at it after his own taste. A junior fared badly if the joint happened to be a loin or a shoulder and he had not appetite enough for the fat and bones. The knives and forks often ran short, and boys were occasionally obliged to be content with the reversion of such adjuncts. On Sundays plum-pudding of a peculiar construction, by some considered very palatable, made of unchopped suet and unstoned raisins, made its appearance. Indifferent beer was drunk by the Collegers out of painted tin mugs. On Founder's Day and Election Saturday half a chicken and pressed greens was served to every boy. Beyond this the fare provided, as has been said, consisted entirely and solely of mutton. In connection with this, however, it is but fair to remember that not a few boys objected to the beef which, at a yet earlier period, figured on the College menu. One of these, according to Sir Dudley Carleton, was the "dainty-mouthed" young Phil Lytton, son of Sir Rowland Lytton of Knebworth. Collegers whose purses permitted were allowed to purchase more or less savoury messes from the cook, one of whose most

famed dishes was, for some unknown reason, known as "blue-pill."

Three of the Lower boys waited upon Sixth Form in Hall, handing them their plates and pouring out their beer, one being specially detailed to hold back the long sleeves of the gown on the Upper boy who carved the joint. This custom of "servitors," as they were called, perhaps of a too menial kind, was not unwisely abolished some thirty years ago, the staff of College servants having been increased.

Many of the old College servants were characters like the original Webber, who seems to have inaugurated the sock shop, which is now Rowland's, near Barnes Pool Bridge. Webber was College cook in the early portion of the last century, in addition to which he manufactured the birches then in much request. Owing probably to this, he incurred a sort of curious unpopularity, a legend being started that he had run away from the battle of Waterloo, therefore the usual taunt of the Collegers, for whom he carved in the Hall, was, "Pass up to old Webber that we want to see his Waterloo medal." The story appears to have been purely mythical.

A great College functionary was the chief butler. The last man to hold this office was Mr. James Culliford, who died in 1901, aged eighty-nine. The illustration facing page 202 shows him in the traditional uniform of Eton blue which is now no longer worn, its use having been discontinued for no

particular reason seemingly. The veteran in question also appears in the group of College servants, of whom the sole survivor is the little boy, Mr. Culliford's son, who for so many years has been known to Etonians as the manager of the famous Eton tailor, Tom Brown. In this group (reproduced by the courtesy of Mr. Culliford from a scarce old photograph in his possession) can also be seen the last College constable, honest old Bott, who was such a well-known figure in the days when, with a colleague (one of the same group), he was responsible for the due maintenance of law and order. In his long coat of Eton blue, with the College arms embroidered upon his sleeve, and glazed top-hat, Bott was a sight which inspired tramps and petty evil-doers of every sort with genuine awe, and the vast majority of such folk took care to give him a wide berth. Bott had done good service as a soldier, having, it was said, fought at Albuera and Waterloo, though according to some his military service had been confined to serving during the American War. In any case, the fine old fellow was a typical Englishman of a robust age.

On certain days, owing to the observance of ancient custom, the Colleger's lot sustained some amelioration. On February 27th, for instance, the Provost or his Deputy presented every Colleger, beginning with the lowest, with a threepenny piece. The origin of this custom was that Provost Bost (1477-1504) left a sum which gave each Colleger



Mr. J. Long	C. Westbrook	J. Wagstaffe	H. Atkins	W. Runicles	Bott
(College Porter)	(Cook)	(Scullion)	(Brewer)	(Photographer)	(Policeman)
		W. Perkins	J. Culliford		
		(Policeman)	(Butler)		
			G. Culliford		
			(Son)		

Old College Servants

Photo lent by G. Culliford, Esq.

twopence, and Provost Lupton (1504-1535) left them the extra penny. A doubtful tradition declared that a Colleger was entitled to half a sheep, and that the College was merely giving him what was its equivalent in money during the Middle Ages. An impudent young Colleger who had heard of this tradition, being offered his threepence by the Bursar, Mr. Bethell, a man of very uncertain temper, once calmly said, "No, thank you, sir; I want my half sheep." Bethell flew into a passion, and exclaimed, "I'll mention this matter to Dr. Hawtrey, and have you flogged," and in due course Branwell—so the "Tug" was named—expiated his temerity at the block. Threepenny Day, I believe, is one of the very few old Eton customs which is still maintained.

Occasionally protests would be made in order to secure some slight improvement in the dinner. The execrable quality of the beer in particular was several times brought to the notice of the Fellows, but beyond one of their number coming into Hall and looking at the cans nothing was done.

In comparatively remote times a discussion took place amongst the authorities on the question whether it was necessary for the Collegers to have their potatoes peeled or sent up in their skins. Two of the Fellows, as it happened, though not related, bore the same name. One was an advocate for the peeling system, declaring that the boys had been treated "like hogs"; the other opposed it as an unnecessary piece of refinement.

In consequence they were afterwards distinguished by the Collegers as "Hog R——" and "Peeli-po R——," and the descendants of both families, who were at Eton for many generations, always bore the hereditary nicknames of "Hogs" and "Peelipos."

Besides the squalor and discomfort amidst which the Collegers lived there was much horse-play and bullying, and for the most part small boys led a wretched life. Besides having to undergo various unpleasant initiatory ceremonies, one of which consisted in swallowing an unsavoury mixture of salt and water, their life was rendered wretched by rough jokes. A bolster shaken down hard at one end could do a lot of damage, knocking over candles and ink-pots, or bringing the unsuspecting to the ground with a well-directed blow on the ankles from behind. A "Jew," as a new boy was called, was also apt to wake up in the night to find a rope tied to his big toe, by which he was dragged from his bed. The only chance to escape such nocturnal visitations was to keep awake for some time, and, if he heard whispering, to creep out of bed and under that of a neighbour till he was safe from danger. Sometimes he would be "put into play" till he was sore all over. This most disagreeable ordeal was as follows. Around one of the large fire-places in Long Chamber two bedsteads were placed close together on each side, and two at the end, forming an enclosure. The boy "put into play" was placed in one corner, next to the

captain, a certain number of the Upper boys being seated on the bedsteads. At a given signal the captain started him with a hearty kick, which generally was sufficiently hard to propel him to the opposite side ; from thence he would be flung back quite as expeditiously. Bandied about like a human shuttlecock, bruises would soon begin to make him sore all over, but only when it was evident that he was in severe pain would the boy be released and some shivering little spectator seized and made to take his place.

Another cruel and brutal College practice which prevailed throughout the fortnight before Election was tossing boys in a blanket. Sometimes an unpopular boy would be put in the blanket with a quantity of books, when he was certain to be most severely bruised. The custom was, after forcing the boy on to one of the small blankets, which was held all round by the bigger boys, to repeat this line :

Ibis ab excusso missus ad astra Sa-go.

At the end of the syllable *so* a little shake was given, but at the last *go* he was sent quivering to the ceiling. A boy named Rowland Williams was severely injured in one of these tossings. Hurlled up to the ceiling, in his descent he fell sideways on to a bedpost and was completely scalped. Only by a most fortunate chance did he escape death, sustaining concussion of the brain. His scalp, which hung down his neck, was sewn on again, and by great good fortune he completely recovered.

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A less dangerous though highly unpleasant ordeal to which new Collegers were subjected was the ceremony known as "Pricking for Sheriff." The boy was laid across the lap of the chief executioner, face downwards, and into a very tightened and thin surface of small-clothes the assistant executioners ran pins, warning the victim that if he screamed louder than his predecessor he would be elected Sheriff and fined a bag of walnuts.

At this time the relations between Collegers and Oppidans were not very cordial, the Lower boys amongst the latter in particular often rendering themselves peculiarly objectionable to the King's scholars, at whom they were wont to jeer. Sometimes some especially aggressive little Oppidan would be caught and taken into Long Chamber, and either soundly thrashed or caned, or else subjected to the blanket-tossing process which has just been mentioned. When this was the case the victim for some time after had good reason to remember his half an hour passed amidst the "Tugs"—which term in those days was far more opprobrious than is at present the case.

The exact origin of the word "Tug" has never been cleared up. The most popular explanation has always been that it is derived from the Latin word *toga*, a gown, and referred to the black gowns they wore, and still wear, in school. It should here be added that up to 1864 this indispensable appurtenance of a King's scholar was made of cloth and very heavy. In that year, however,

the light material at present in use was introduced, while the length of the gown was somewhat reduced. The old-fashioned gowns contained pockets, which were often receptacles for viands and dainties to be smuggled into Long Chamber. A parody of Gray's *Ode on Eton College*, written by a King's scholar in 1798, alludes to this :—

I know my gown when first it flowed
An awkward majesty bestowed,
When waving fresh each woolly wing
That worn-out elbows serve to hide,
Or else to hold unknown, unspied,
A loaf or pudding in.

As far as the writer has been able to ascertain, the top-hat, or in earlier times its predecessor, the cocked or three-cornered one, has always been the head-dress worn by Collegers, though in an illustration¹ representing the Iron Duke being cheered in the quadrangle in the middle of the forties of the last century, the King's scholars are shown wearing or waving mortar-boards. These, it would appear, existed only in the imagination of the artist.

The allusion to worn-out elbows in the ditty given above is significant as to the poverty-stricken appearance of the Collegers, most of whom were then very sorrily dressed. Almost without exception they were boys whose parents had but small means. As a matter of fact College was never intended to be an educational refuge for rich or high-born boys, and, as a highly competent critic has remarked, "A

¹ This appeared in the *Illustrated London News* during the forties of the last century.

young aristocrat in a serge gown is an anomaly not contemplated by the statutes of the royal founder."

Before the reforms made in College in 1845 most of the King's scholars, it must be confessed, were more of the class intended by Henry VI. than has since been the case. In latter years many Collegers have belonged to well-to-do or even rich families, whereas the Foundation was specially intended for poor boys. In the early part of the nineteenth century a certain proportion of those in College were the sons of Eton or Windsor doctors or solicitors, royal servants, or successful tradesmen. Besides these there were sons of Eton masters and boys of impoverished country squires. The former class of boys, however, were in some way made to feel that they were not the equals of the sons of gentlemen, and subjected to petty humiliations which did their schoolfellows small honour.

Besides being exposed to physical violence, small boys, especially if they were clever, were sometimes made to do work for stupid big ones. A certain lazy lout, however, was once well served out by his victim. In difficulties as to the composition of a set of verses, the bully one day got hold of a smaller schoolmate, and under the threat of a severe licking got him to do the verses for him. When, however, the bully came to showing up the lines which he had not done, and which he had not even troubled to read, they were found to be so grossly indecent and outrageous in tone that the master who looked at them at

once declared the writer should be flogged. At first the bully did not dare admit that they were not of his own making, but eventually at the block he admitted the fraud, with the result that the boy who had played him the trick was also punished. It is to be hoped, however, that the bully received the more severe thrashing of the two.

When the celebrated Porson was a Collegger, one of his contemporaries was Charles Simeon, known as "Snowball" Simeon, the ugliest boy in College, who afterwards became an earnest Evangelical preacher. In after life he looked back upon the doings in Long Chamber and its lawless rowdyism with horror, and once told a friend that he would be tempted even to murder his own son sooner than let him see in College the sights he had seen.

Under such circumstances it is not surprising that small Colleggers, if they were sensitive boys, occasionally made determined attempts to run away. One did so more than thirteen times, and became so well known on the road that he was almost sure to be stopped before he got far. Nevertheless he once got up to town in a very curious manner. He slunk early, before morning school, into the yard of the Christopher; the London coach was standing outside, and no one by, so he was able unobserved to creep into the boot, trusting to luck, which befriended him, for there chanced to be that morning no passengers, and consequently no luggage to be stowed away. The runaway was therefore driven without disturbance in his uneasy

berth, which he only vacated on the arrival of the coach at the White Horse cellars in Piccadilly.

The general tone in College was somewhat rough and irreverent, as may be judged from the following. Every Sunday morning at nine o'clock the Collegers assembled in Lower School for prayers, the headmaster sitting in the desk, and a praepostor standing up repeating the Confession and a prayer or two out of the Winchester Prayer-Book. All joined in the 100th Psalm, which sometimes, more especially towards the end of the Half, was made the occasion of a not very seemly demonstration. During the last Sunday the order went round that every one was to sing his loudest, and on one occasion the noise was so terrific that it could almost be heard in the playing fields. Keate, who was at that time in the desk, did not, however, take any notice of this irreverent outburst. He had been a youthful Colleger himself, and probably considered that the whole thing was merely a too enthusiastic performance of an old Eton tradition, which in his eyes excused a good deal.

In school work the Collegers then, as now, easily maintained an almost unchallenged supremacy. Almost without exception the sons of poor parents, accurately grounded and imbued with the idea that education was a real preparation for life, they knew that they would have to make their way in the world by their own exertions, for which reason to be "a sap" in College was quite an ordinary thing. Besides this, sixty or seventy

years ago the very traditional customs which excluded a King's scholar from comparatively expensive amusements, such as the boats, and made him a member of a separate football and cricket club, served to protect a boy from drifting into various forms of fashionable idleness.

At one time few boys went into College who had not previously been Oppidans, and, till Provost Hodgson's reforms made it possible for every boy to have a separate cubicle room, Collegers used to have rooms down town or in their tutor's houses, where they could escape from fag masters and the disorder of Long Chamber. In such rooms they could work, wash, and eat in peace.

Up to 1864 King's scholars had to wear their gowns out of school, though they abandoned them before passing over Barnes Pool Bridge. A sock shop in the High Street called Trone's was almost exclusively frequented by King's scholars because they were allowed to leave their gowns there when going into Windsor. Oppidans never frequented it, and, curiously enough, as showing the persistence of traditional usage, years later, when the shop had changed owners, though no one could give any particular reason, it was supposed to be "scuggish" to pass its doors.

Whilst Long Chamber could never have been called an abode of bliss, it had its pleasures, one of the chief of which was the rat-hunting, in which Porson is said to have taken so much delight. If the Collegers lacked food they never lacked game

in the shape of rats, which fairly swarmed about the ancient dormitory. Some of these animals which defied capture became well known to the boys, who in a sort of way felt a respect for one veteran—an immense, perfectly gray old rat, which was supposed to be the ghost of King Henry VI., or at any rate to have been in being from the very first foundation of the College.

All sorts of food was constantly being smuggled in. According to tradition, a sow was once captured and stowed away on the leads till she had farrowed and provided roast sucking-pig in abundance. Hares and other game surreptitiously caught in Windsor Park furnished many a hearty feast. The Collegers were anything but particular, and on one occasion, it is said, actually roasted and ate an unfortunate swan which they had lured to its doom.

A great College institution was Fire-place—a supper held before a roaring blaze, carefully set going by Lower boys in one of the two huge grates in Long Chamber, under the eyes of the captain of the room, who enjoyed the privilege of granting an extension of revelling time (known as a half-holiday) beyond the hour of ten, when boys were expected to be in bed. Five bedsteads were run out in two parallel rows around the Upper Fire-place, one facing the cheerful glow, and an impromptu supper took place, the boys consuming such provisions as they had been able to smuggle in. A certain amount of these were obtained from

the Christopher “on tick,” whilst a common dish was a grill made of scrag ends of mutton and bones purloined from Hall. Songs followed this supper, the proceedings, which terminated at eleven, being enlivened by College songs roared in chorus. These were chiefly of a Bacchanalian or nautical order; some also dealt with poaching. A favourite song was “The fine old Eton Colleger—one of the Olden Time.” The last verse of this ran:—

Now times are changed, and we are changed, and Keate has
passed away,
Still College hearts and College hands maintain old Eton’s sway;
And though our chamber is not filled as it was filled of yore,
We still will beat the Oppidans at bat and foot and oar,
Like the fine old Eton Collegers,
Those of the olden time.

Not infrequently very palatable viands were obtained by the Upper boys and real banquets held, the pleasures of which were enhanced by the potations which “Johnny Bear” brought from the Christopher and pushed through the bars of Lower Chamber, the usual receiving-room of all smuggled goods, on the ground floor and adjoining the school-yard. The Lower boy whose turn it was to watch for Johnny’s arrival had pretty good cause to remember such visits on cold nights.

The Headmaster’s servant, it should be added, was entrusted with the duty of seeing that no Colleger got out at night. Strict fidelity to this duty made him highly unpopular, for he would never consent to be bribed. Principal and only locker-up and gaoler to the boys, birch collector,

and rod distributor, he was generally known by the mythological appellation of Cerberus.

Life in Long Chamber, like most unpleasant ordeals, had its alleviations. Once a year, for instance, there was an impromptu masquerade, concluded by a march round, for which Jobey Joel, an Eton character who survived till a few years ago, supplied the music, and, extraordinary as it may seem, theatricals flourished unchecked. Such performances dated back to the early eighteenth century, since which time they had been given with the full knowledge of the authorities. In 1762, it is true, Dr. Barnard, who was then Headmaster, had tried to stop them, bursting in upon a representation of *Cato*, and, much to his disgust, finding that a long wig which he tore from one of the actor's heads belonged to the Vice-Provost; but no drastic measures were taken, and theatricals continued to take place as before. Out of Long Chamber, however, the drama was tabooed. Both Drs. Keate and Hawtrey connived at the performances in Long Chamber, the latter especially ignoring all theatrical preparations even when they were right under his nose. Favourite pieces were *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *High Life below Stairs*, and *Orlando Furioso*. For the purposes of this last play, Anson—a powerful Colleger—once actually smuggled a donkey into College, where it was stabled and fed till brought out to carry Bombastes. The last play ever given in Long Chamber was *A Night in China*, written by a

Colleger named King, and played in 1845. After this, however, some Collegers, amongst whom was Frank Tarver, afterwards well known to several generations of Etonians as French Master, indulged in theatricals at the back of Turnock's tailor's shop in the town.

Eton has furnished some capital recruits to the London stage—Charles Kean, the brothers Hawtrey, Mr. Willie Elliot, and others, including that excellent actor, Mr. Arthur Bouchier, who even as an Eton boy was celebrated for his dramatic zeal. About 1882, with Bogle Smith, Collet, Gilmor, and a few more, he organised the "Eton Strollers," the prologue for whose first play was written by the Hon. Arthur Bligh, a boy of considerable literary and poetic taste, who, in collaboration with Bouchier, wrote a drama which was sent to Irving for production. "Do these boys play cricket?" inquired the great actor when he received the manuscript; as a matter of fact both were very fair cricketers, Bouchier being a good wicket-keep.

Mr. Bouchier's first theatrical *entrepreneur* was Lord Kenyon, in whose room at Cameron's he made his *début* in *Uncle's Will*, in which he acted with Johnson and Berkeley-Levett. When Mr. Cameron, who was not sympathetic to theatricals, left Eton, Bouchier went to the Rev. T. Dalton's, where his aspirations received far greater encouragement; indeed his Housemaster became imbued with such enthusiasm for theatricals that a colleague

once chaffingly inquired of him, "Is it true that young Bouchier is going to bring you out on the Music Hall stage?" Regular performances were now given in Pupil Room, for which a small charge—generally a penny a seat—was made, the proceeds going to the Eton Mission, for the benefit of which the whole company, including Mr. Dalton (who gave a humorous recitation), gave an entertainment at Hackney Wick.

The exigences of the drama, however, occasionally clashed with discipline. When, for instance, in *Still Waters Run Deep*, after the lines, "Do you smoke?" "Yes, I'll have a cigar," two of the actors lit up, Mr. Dalton from his place amongst the audience shouted out, "No, you don't," and was only appeased by an examination of the cigars, which proved to be dummies. On another occasion when a careless or mischievous Lower boy had manufactured snow for the duel scene in the *Corsican Brothers* by tearing up a pile of "extra-works" which had been lying on Mr. Dalton's desk for correction, the latter became so scandalised at seeing the duellists enveloped in a "cloud of equations" that, after ejaculating, "One minute! This performance now ceases," he set actors and audience to the uncongenial task of putting the pieces together. The most ambitious effort of the company was an elaborate performance of *The Merchant of Venice*, in which Reggie Lucas (see Chapter X.) took part.

Bouchier was celebrated for his imitations of

Masters, about the most amusing of which was an impersonation of a certain squeaky-voiced tutor after he had been cut over by an imaginary cricket ball. As luck would have it, the latter, whilst playing in an eleven of Masters against boys, one of whom was Bouchier, did happen to sustain a painful injury, with the result that he proceeded to give an almost exact reproduction of himself as portrayed by his imitator, who could not help being convulsed with laughter as he led the sufferer off the ground. Later on, the victim, who, of course, had no idea of the real cause of this merriment, said to a colleague, “What hurt me more than the pain was the brutality of the boy Bouchier.”

In course of time Bouchier formed his imitations into a sketch, entitled *Under the Clock*, which depicted a number of Eton Masters at Lord's, and before he left the late Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell arranged that this should be heard by the individuals concerned, whom he posted behind trees in Poet's Walk whilst the author gave his performance close by. They were all very much amused, and when it was over came forward to congratulate the youthful aspirant to dramatic fame, whom they shook warmly by the hand and wished him all success in his future career.

To return to the story of College—the pleasures as well as the trials of Long Chamber came to an end in 1845, for in September of that year the new buildings were opened and the old days of College became mere memories of an

obsolete age. The discomforts and hardships of Long Chamber were then forgotten by most of the boys who had slept there. In spite of the far better conditions they chafed at the lack of freedom and the end of "Fire-place" with its suppers and choruses. The Chamber itself, though not pulled down, was entirely remodelled, cubicles for a limited number of boys being constructed and the whole place made habitable and clean.

Election Saturday, the glories of which have now departed for ever, was a great day not only for those in College, whom it more immediately concerned, but for the whole school. At two o'clock the Provost of King's College, Cambridge, attended by two examiners called "Posers," drove into Weston's Yard. The arrival of his yellow coach, drawn by four smoking horses, always produced great excitement. Meeting the Provost of Eton, a kiss of peace was exchanged (abandoned in Dr. Hawtrey's days for a handshake). A speech was then made in Latin by the captain of the school under the archway of Lupton's Tower, its main purport being the offering of congratulations to the Provost on his arrival at the College. The rest of the programme was much the same as that still gone through on the 4th of June—speeches in the Upper School at eleven, banquet of dons in the College Hall at two, processions of the boats in the evening to Surly Hall, with fireworks off the Eyot on the return, and finally, sock suppers in all the houses. The fun on Election Saturday, however,

was always more fast and furious than on the 4th of June, because the school was to break up on the following Monday, and the boys who were going to leave looked upon themselves as already emancipated. For this reason turbulent spirits did not scruple to commit all sorts of extravagances, being pretty sure that just preceding the holidays they would escape unpunished.

On the Tuesday and Wednesday following, candidates for College were examined, as well as scholars seeking election to King's. The "Posers," or examining chaplains, were terrific gentlemen in the eyes of the boys; whilst examination took place, Election-chamber was to most an awful room, then rendered somewhat weird and uncanny by the light filtering through an immense red curtain, let down at the large oriel window, which imparted a sort of devilish appearance to the "Posers."

A very quaint old usage existed in connection with these "Posers," each of them being attended by a Colleger, who waited upon him in Hall and elsewhere if required, for which the boy—quaintly called the "Poser's child"—received a fee of a guinea, selection for the office by the Headmaster being regarded as being a sort of minor honour. The existence of this curious custom, which of course died a natural death with the "Posers" themselves, has generally, I think, escaped mention in books dealing with Eton. It was brought to my notice by my old tutor, Mr. H. W. Mozley (Newcastle Scholar, 1860), who in this and other ways has given

me valuable information which I here acknowledge; he himself had been "Poser's child" in 1859.

The days following Election Saturday were always particularly depressing and gloomy, and the poor King's scholars had a melancholy time. The gentlemen, as the tradespeople had the impertinence to call the Oppidans, went home on the Monday, whilst Collegers had to wait until the Thursday. All the shops were shut up, and scarcely any one about.

Collegers, like Oppidans, then remained at Eton longer than at present—as late as 1874 there was a King's Scholar, Tuck by name, who was said to have been nine years at the school. In the days when such a close connection existed between Eton and King's, a Colleger leaving to go to Cambridge used to go through the old form known as "Ripping." This was performed at the Provost's Lodge. The two folds of the Colleger's serge gown were sewn together in front, and the Provost "ripped" them asunder, pronouncing some Latin formula, after which he congratulated the embryo scholar of King's, and gave him good advice as to his future career. The gown, it must be remembered, was then an essential part of the Colleger's equipment out of as well as in school. Although the rule was not strictly adhered to, they were even supposed to wear their gowns whilst playing games.

All the picturesque features of Election disappeared in the sixties, when new statutes were sub-

stituted for those of the Founder, and the relations between King's College, Cambridge, and Eton entirely changed. In 1861 William Austen Leigh and Felix Cobbold were elected to King's. With them ended the ancient succession of Eton scholars after it had continued, with few if any interruptions, under the statutes of Henry VI., for the period of four hundred and nineteen years, William Hatecliffe (1443), afterwards Secretary to King Edward IV., and Felix Thornley Cobbold (1862) being the first and last scholars. The right of the latter to a scholarship at King's was, it should be added, disputed, as was that of William Austen Leigh, the Provost and Fellows of the Cambridge College urging that the new statutes were already in operation. This question, which never ought to have been raised, inasmuch as the names of these boys were on the indenture before the existence of the new statutes, was submitted to legal opinion and then to the "Visitor." It was eventually justly decided that the two Eton scholars were entitled to scholarships at King's College, with all their rights, emoluments, and consequences, and with this terminated the ancient and sisterly connection between the two Foundations.

The new statutes provided that four scholarships at King's should be annually offered for competition to the scholars of Eton, tenable for six years, value £80 per annum, with tuition, rooms, and commons free. The injury done to the interests of Eton by the new arrangements was very great, for four

scholarships per annum did not amount to the average of the old succession, which ranged from four and a half to five, while the difference between a scholarship of six years' tenure and one which led to a Fellowship that might be held for life was so great as to be difficult to calculate. The remarkable features in these iniquitous changes were the earnestness with which they were pressed by King's, which seemingly was anxious to rid itself of its connection with Eton—that is, as far as it could—and the weakness of Eton and its dereliction of duty to itself and its scholars in acquiescing in them without any attempt to obtain any mitigation or revision which might certainly have been effected. Henry Norris Churton, the first Colleger to be affected by the new state of affairs, declined to accept the scholarship at King's to which he was elected in July, but Richard Durnford, elected in the same month, did accept, and thus became the first Eton scholar who went to King's under the new statutes.

A few years later—in 1871—the repeal of the entire code of statutes which had regulated Eton since the 21st December, 1443, did a good deal more towards nullifying the wishes of Henry VI. The old statutes laid down that there should be seventy *poor* scholars—an important clause which the new ones abolished. At present, directly contrary to the Founder's intention, there is nothing to prevent the son of a multi-millionaire from competing for an Eton scholarship.



Sixth-Form Bench
Lithograph lent by the Earl of Roxbury, K.G.

VIII

SCHOOL WORK

WHILST Eton has occasionally produced some very fine scholars—the Marquis Wellesley was a case in point—it cannot be said that the traditions of the school are very favourable to learning, which to a large proportion of Etonians has seemed of less importance than the acquisition of worldly wisdom. More than a hundred years ago De Quincey noted the peculiar tone which prevailed amongst Eton boys, who showed a premature knowledge of the world far exceeding that possessed by the scholars at any other school. The graceful self-possession of the boys attracted his attention, but he thought them lacking in self-restraint. Such an accusation, however, could not justly be made in more modern days, when a sort of genial unconcern has come to be regarded as one of the principal characteristics of the typical Etonian, who, preferring anecdote to argument, is profoundly convinced that amongst human institutions his school stands easily first.

With respect to most modern criticisms which have been levelled against the system of education, it must be remembered that in their efforts to

teach, the masters are handicapped by one or two fundamental difficulties not easy to surmount.

Eton, in a much larger proportion than any other school, has contained, and does contain, the children of rich parents, boys of good birth and large expectations, most of whom realise very early in life that there is no absolute necessity for them to work ; consequently something like a leaven of indolence permeates the school, the tone of which it is, perhaps unjustly, said has of late years been impaired by an increasing number of sons of millionaire parvenus, who are allowed extravagant sums by parents anxious to forward the social success of their offspring by any kind of means. Such parents for the most part have no real wish that their boys should be educated at all, and send them to Eton simply to form friendships and to be turned into gentlemen ; or perhaps merely because Eton enjoys the reputation of being a fashionable school. Be this as it may, the number of rich boys sprung from the commercial, or rather financial, classes has undoubtedly increased, whilst foreigners now flock to Eton in ever-swelling numbers. As a result tales, probably untrue, have been circulated of wealthy boys achieving a spurious popularity owing to their pockets being constantly replenished from home, whilst, according to one incredible rumour, the sons of certain rich speculators, imbued with an hereditary faculty for money-making, have, on occasions, not hesitated to loan portions of their abundant funds at an extravagant rate of interest.

The writer, be it understood, does not for a moment say that such a state of affairs really exists, but the fact remains that such things have been whispered, of course with no increase to the prestige of the school. It is not healthy for boys to be allowed unlimited pocket-money, and men of moderate means—belonging to what may be called “old Eton families”—do not care to expose their sons to the contamination of mingling with schoolmates of alien blood whose sole claim to consideration lies in their parent’s enormous wealth. In addition to this, quite a number of foreign boys are sent to be educated at Eton, which has occasionally not proved altogether advantageous to the best interests of the school.

Modern Eton as it is to-day may be said to have originated from the recommendations of the Public School Commission, which began its work in 1861, at which time a wind of change was blowing about old places in England, with the result that many a weather-worn relic went down before it. As a result of the labours of this body, the charm of the school’s celestial quiet was broken, some of the evidence taken having revealed an unsatisfactory state of affairs which seemed to call for drastic change. It was, for instance, conclusively shown that the masters had more on their hands than they could do, and some did not make any scruple about complaining. “We are enormously overworked,” said one. “There is no time,” said another, “for society, for meeting each other, for relaxation, and

no time, I may say, for private reading, and I consider that prejudicial to the school." In fact, as Mr. Commissioner Vaughan put it, it seemed a characteristic of the Eton system that "the masters did too much for the boys, and the boys did too little for themselves." The real state of affairs at Eton at that time was that an immense deal of work was got out of the masters, and little out of the boys. Since those days the number of masters has swelled to the very adequate number of sixty-five or more, exclusive of the Head and Lower Master, but the tutorial system, which has at various times aroused a good deal of adverse criticism, remains unchanged, and in all probability will continue to flourish as long as Eton lasts.

Half a century ago it was urged that the main mistake in the Eton system lay in the retention of the dead languages as the staple of school work, whilst the panacea put forward for the admitted ignorance of Young England was the adoption by the majority of boys of what is known as a "special education." With some justice it was urged that as a boy when he goes out into the great world is unlikely to read much Greek, and even less likely to write much Latin verse, his school days had much better be occupied in learning something which is practical and useful. Whilst the classics are still the main feature of the school curriculum, a boy may now, on having reached a certain standard (usually attained about the age of $16\frac{1}{2}$), learn modern languages, science, history, mathe-

matics, or continue to study Greek and Latin, according as he, or rather his parents, may decide. In addition to this, the Army class provides an alternative course of study for those about to enter upon a military career.

An entirely new feature is that a number of boys going to Eton now enter for the foundation examination, though without any idea of becoming King's scholars should they pass. In July 1910 three of the nineteen scholars who passed into Eton entered as "Oppidan scholars."

With regard to the modern languages mentioned above, it is to be hoped that the old Eton method of teaching has been discarded. In the past the time set apart for French was too often merely a farcical interlude, during which boys devoted all their energies to teasing the master! The old classical system would be preferable if anything of the sort survives, for, after all, even a slight knowledge of the classics is better than an imperfectly assimilated smattering of a modern tongue. In old days very thorough methods were adopted in connection with Latin and Greek. One luckless lad in Keate's division construed *Edægi*, I have eaten; *monumentum*, a monument; *perennius*, harder; *aere*, than brass. "Oh, you have, have you?" said the Doctor; "then you'll stay afterwards, and I'll give you something to help digest it," and he did. On the whole, educational authorities are still loth to exclude Latin and Greek. The Commission of fifty years ago, after

hearing much evidence, were of this opinion. The Commissioners reported :—

We believe that for the instruction of boys, especially when collected in a large school, it is material that there should be some one principal branch of study, invested with a recognised and, if possible, a traditional importance, to which the principal weight should be assigned and the largest share of time and attention given. We believe that this is necessary in order to concentrate attention, to stimulate industry, to supply to the whole school a common ground of literary interest, and a common path of promotion. . . . We are of opinion that the classical languages and literature should continue to hold, as they do now, the principal place in public school education.

There is certainly much to be said for Latin as an aid to the acquirement of “exact expression,” but Greek is another matter altogether. According to the writer’s own experience, the majority of boys never obtained any real grip upon that defunct tongue, besides which, for all but an infinitesimal number, in after life Greek, as Mr. Andrew Carnegie has somewhat bluntly put it, “is of no more use than Choctaw.”

The old Eton system was largely composed of paradoxical omissions, and by an extraordinary fiction boys were supposed to be thoroughly acquainted with subjects such as modern geography and arithmetic, of which, in reality, they knew nothing at all.

Within comparatively recent years mathematics had no regular place in the curriculum of the school. It is true that there was an “extra”

master or two who was allowed to take those who liked to be taught and charged, but he had no means of enforcing discipline, and, however irritated he might be, had no right to complain to the Headmaster. In Mr. Gladstone's Eton days Major Hexter, who kept a boarding-house, and was styled the writing-master, taught mathematics. Only the Lower boys, however, went to him, and when they were certified as proficient in long division the Major troubled them no more. When in 1836 the Rev. Stephen Hawtrey came to the school as mathematical master he was only allowed to give his lessons as "extras," and to the first thirty boys in the school, because Major Hexter was supposed to have a vested interest in the ignorance of the remainder. The whole thing ended in Mr. Hawtrey paying the Major a pension of £200 a year, so that the latter's opposition to the teaching of Euclid and algebra might be withdrawn.

Even after he had obtained a more or less regular position, Mr. Stephen Hawtrey's lot was none too happy, and this most kindly man passed many irritating half-hours in the round theatrical-looking building which some called the "Station House." Those boys whose parents desired it were entered on the books of this establishment, but the time spent there was one rather of recreation than of study. Mischievous boys were constantly turning off the gas or letting off squibs and crackers, especially in November, which was

a particularly merry season. Besides this, the unfortunate master did not receive much sympathy or commiseration from his classical superiors, being in a measure regarded as an interloper and an enemy to versification.

The last writing-master as provided for by the ancient statutes was a Mr. Harris, who always resented not being allowed to wear a cap and gown like the other masters. Highly tenacious of such privileges as he could contrive to obtain, he was always well pleased when small boys touched their hats to him in the street, punctiliously returning such salutations with a grand sweep of the arm. A hater of steel pens, one of his principal occupations was mending quills and trying their nibs on his thumb-nail. He had always a quill behind one of his ears, occasionally behind both; and, being a little absent-minded, would sometimes, to the general delight, sally forth from school with his hat on and a pair of fresh-mended quills sticking out underneath. Mr. Harris taught only Lower boys, but big ones, whose bad hand-writing had attracted attention, were sometimes sent to him to learn how to write properly; this, needless to say, was looked upon as a great humiliation.

The old Eton system could not, of course, fit a boy for a commercial or business career—as a matter of fact it was never intended to do so. The modern system, on the other hand, makes something more than a pretence of equipping Etonians

for any profession they may select, though, considering the traditions of the school, this is no easy task. The old idea was that, exclusive of the Collegers, a number of whom were always fine scholars, it did not much matter if the boys were taught Sanscrit or Chinese, the main purpose of an Eton education being not so much to inculcate what was vulgarly called “book-learning,” as to fit Etonians to take their place in the great world outside.

Of late years, however, the authorities have made real progress in their efforts to convert “an Eton education” into more of a reality. The facilities for study at Eton have always been good, and within recent years much has been done to improve them, with, it would seem, satisfactory results. White tickets have been invented as a final supreme punishment when yellow tickets have failed to make a culprit realise his own shortcomings, whilst the quaintly named “Tardy-book,” an institution of entirely modern origin, has been devised to strike terror into those who make a practice of being late for school.

The old haphazard methods which formerly prevailed have been discarded in favour of more business-like ways, the school office, which undertakes the distribution of much connected with the work of the school, being a thoroughly workmanlike and efficient institution. In its early days, however, a few things somehow got mislaid, which, of course, furnished unscrupulous boys who had failed to do

any punishment with the plausible excuse that their lines had got lost there.

Much less idleness seems now to prevail, the boys being certainly forced to work more than was the case in the writer's day, when so many of them, it must be admitted, learnt very little indeed, contriving to go through the school with a really surprising lack of mental effort. To such as these the only real time of danger was Trials, when they were absolutely obliged to make some attempt at working. Most idlers, however, took such an ordeal very lightly, occasionally supplementing their defective memories by various ingenious contrivances. An expert once, it is said, equipped himself as follows: Right waistcoat pocket, Greek verbs; left waistcoat pocket, Latin verbs; breast pocket, crib to Horace; right tail pocket, crib to Virgil; left tail pocket, crib to Homer; finger-nails, important dates. His ingenuity, however, was all wasted, for he was plucked. The amount of application and intelligence needful to take a good place in such examinations was formerly quite moderate.

Cunning boys had all sorts of ways of avoiding work. Some could calculate to a nicety when they were likely to be put on to construe, and learnt only a particular bit. One master for a long time made it a practice to call upon each boy in turn right through his division, with the result that they confined themselves to learning only about a dozen lines or so apiece. At last, however, the trick was discovered, and one fatal morning the master caused

consternation by putting on the first boy at the end instead of the beginning. A general collapse ensued, boy after boy standing dumbfounded and speechless, instead of rattling off his portion with glib proficiency.

Thirty or forty years ago, it may safely be affirmed, any boy of ordinary intelligence who had received a good grounding at a private school could manage to make his way up to the higher forms without once "muffing Trials," and yet not increase his stock of learning in the very slightest degree. He lived, as it were, upon a capital of knowledge imbibed in the very different atmosphere of some hard-working preparatory school. The enthusiasm for learning which inspired many a boy fresh from such modest seminaries was too often quickly cooled by the banks of the Thames. It was, indeed, admitted by not a few that the longer a boy remained at Eton the more lazy he became. One cheeky lad, indeed, being lectured for idleness by his tutor, who at the same time eulogised the industry of a comparatively new comer, was met by the answer, "Well, sir, I have been here three years and he only one." The tone, at least amongst the majority of the Oppidans, was not encouraging to enthusiasm of any kind, besides which the frank absurdity of certain portions of the Eton curriculum was calculated merely to depress a boy gifted with even average intelligence. Sunday questions, for instance, instituted by Dr. Goodford about 1854, usually resembled nothing so much as a page of

acrostics, the correct solution of which, whilst involving a vast amount of trouble, conduced to anything but a love of the Bible. As an aid to holy living, for which purpose, I believe, they were supposed to be devised, no more pitiful failure ever existed, the sole effects produced being unmitigated boredom and much bad language. In modern days they may have been improved, but in their original form these questions, a number of which dealt with the genealogies of Hebrew kings, were a most unstimulating exercise for the youthful brain.

In many other respects the school-work was idiotically useless and bad, a great part of it having seemingly been devised to entail a maximum of drudgery with a minimum of useful information. Above all, it lacked elasticity, little or no effort being made to encourage a boy in any particular subject for which he exhibited aptitude.

Some features of the curriculum might have been modelled upon the ancient Chinese system. What could have been more ridiculous than to make boys who could scarcely construe a simple sentence attempt to turn out Latin verse? It would have been far better to teach greater Eton—that is, the mass of more or less ignorant dunces—how to write a good letter in their own language, or driven into their brains some knowledge of modern geography, yet nothing of the sort was ever attempted.

The writing of Latin verse was one of the most time-honoured Eton traditions which had to be

undertaken by every boy who emerged from the Lower Forms of the school, and every week a copy of verses was set by the masters who took the divisions of the Fifth Form. These verses had to be done by the boys as best they could, being submitted for correction to the tutors, who got the verses into shape, eliminating "false quantities" and all other mistakes, in the course of which operation they themselves often composed a good deal of Latin poetry. The revised copy was then returned to the boy, who wrote a "fair copy" out of school, and afterwards showed up both copies to the Division Master. The strain on the tutors was at times great, and unscrupulous boys, with the additional help of a clever friend, would sometimes go through the whole of their Eton career without in the least understanding anything at all about verse-writing.

Such a state of affairs exerted a demoralising effect upon the minds of earnest, well-meaning boys, who gradually came to see that certain features of their education were entirely futile. Besides this, owing to the general tone of the school, a large part of which regarded school-work as being merely a sort of useless way of wasting time, their estimation of the value of effort of all kind lessened, whilst the conviction was forced upon them that no particular *kudos* was to be gained by conscientious study, which they came to look upon as the peculiar appanage of "Tugs" and "Saps."

No feat of learning on the part of a King's

scholar ever aroused the slightest surprise, it being generally assumed that "Tugs," unlike the rest of the school, having been born "Saps," or always made to work, could master every kind of learning with the greatest ease. The Newcastle Scholar, always a boy of high intellectual attainments, excited no interest amongst the mass of the school—the majority indeed scarcely knew who had won it, and, if asked, would generally reply, "Oh, some Colleger or other." No aspirations to gain Balliol scholarships or places in the class-lists disturbed the serenity of the Oppidan's mind. Such petty ambitions might excite the miserable rivalry of boys at other schools, vain mortals toiling in the lower world of scholarship, "vying with and out-running and outwitting one another." In such contests Eton could afford to look calmly on, secure in that "repose of character" which has for so many generations marked her students. There existed, indeed, a sort of tacit understanding that it was the business of the Collegers to do the intellectual work and to win the school and University honours, whilst the Oppidans were to prove victorious at Henley and, if possible, beat Harrow and Winchester at cricket. A great portion of the school, assuming a natural licence to be idle, had a deeply implanted conviction that reading was not in their line, and at heart believed it was rather a slow thing to do.

The general result of this unsatisfactory standard of course yielded bad results. Calmly secure in

the conviction that to be in the eight or eleven was to have reached the highest pinnacle of boyish ambition, those who excelled in athletics became naturally prone to undervalue intellectual effort and attainments.

To excel at games, not at work, was the ideal set before their youthful eyes; no wonder that for one who persevered in conscientious preparation of his school-work ten succumbed and became content to sink lower and lower in Trials, till at last they just scraped through a few places from the bottom. Admiration for athletics indeed was carried to an almost absurd extreme. Whilst there can be no doubt that exercise and an indulgence in manly games and healthful forms of relaxation are excellent for schoolboys, they should be regarded from a sane and proper point of view, and not held up as the sole end and aim of human existence. Curiously enough, scarcely any great men have been keen athletes during their youthful days, whilst a large proportion of those who have excelled in the cricket field or on the river have been utterly unheard of in after life, where capacity to propel a boat through the water at high speed or drive a cricket ball to the boundary counts scarcely at all. An entire absorption in games to the exclusion of practically all other interests cannot be called a healthy feature of education. Loafing, every one agrees, is a slovenly and demoralising habit, but fanatical interest in cricket, football, or the river is bad in another way, for though it may produce

muscle, it may also, when carried to an extreme, produce atrophy of the brain.

In the rough old days, though sporting pursuits, like fighting, were in high repute, games do not appear to have been taken very seriously at Eton, where there was nothing approaching the modern spirit which makes heroes of the eight and the eleven. In the eighteenth century, though games were played, not a few of the more clever boys would appear to have viewed them with something of good-humoured contempt.

“I can’t say I’m sorry that I was never quite a school-boy,” wrote Horace Walpole; “an expedition against Barge-men, or a match at cricket may be very pretty things to recollect; but, thank my stars, I can remember things that are very near as pretty.”

His friend Gray, though in his famous ode he touched upon the school games, expressed no particular enthusiasm for athletics:—

What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle’s speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

Gray, it should be added, originally wrote

To chase the hoop’s elusive speed,

for, extraordinary as it may appear to the modern Etonian, the hoop was formerly in high favour with Eton boys. Trundling a hoop has long been recognised as one of the best forms of exercise; indeed, the writer has been told that the present Headmaster of Eton, in his day an athlete of high



"O'er Father, Thomas, for thou hast seen & "Disporting on thy mermaid greens;

"Full many a sprightly race.

"The paths of pleasure trace."

From a scarce print in the possession of the Earl of Rosbury, K.G.

distinction, being once abroad where no games could be played, in order to keep himself fit purchased a hoop and took to trundling it with great zest.

As late as the early part of the nineteenth century, during the October half, the majority of Lower School used to indulge in the somewhat infantile delights of trundling a hoop with a stout stick. The Eton hoop was made differently from the ones still used by children, being formed out of a strong ash lathe with a remnant of bark upon its surface. The inevitable collisions of hoops and their trundlers not infrequently led to hostilities, and on several occasions regular pitched battles occurred between Collegers and Oppidans. A famous encounter once took place at the end of the wall near the Chapel door, about twenty boys being on each side, one Saturday after four, big boys in front, little ones behind. Thanks to their gowns, which they adroitly twisted round one arm, the Collegers had the best of the encounter, though the Oppidans were able to draw off without having been definitely beaten. The contest excited great interest, a crowd of people watching the battle, and though the masters were fully aware of what was going on, no attempt was made to interfere. For some reason or other, however, there was no more hoop-trundling till the following year.

In long-past days another form of amusement, generally associated with childhood—marbles—

enjoyed an occasional popularity amongst Lower boys, many of whom prided themselves on the variegated colours contained in their collections, whilst for a time "Bandalore"—which, as "Diabolo," quite recently enjoyed a great vogue all over England—quite captivated the school.

Peg-tops were once in great favour, Weight, who kept a grocer's shop and was known as "Old Tallow Weight," doing a brisk business in such tops and the whip-cord necessary to spin them. The Rev. E. D. Stone (see page 61) says that in his day, under Hawtrey, backgammon and knuckle bones were popular in College.

About 1770 the games¹ popular at Eton were "Cricket, Fives, Shirking Walls, Scrambling Walls, Bally-cally, Battledores, Pegtop, Peg in the ring, Goals, Hopscotch, Heading, Conquering Lobs, Hoops, Marbles, Trap-ball, Steal-baggage, Puss in the corner, Cat-gallows, Kites, Cloyster and Flyer gigs, Tops, Humming-Tops, Hunt the Hare, Hunt the dark lanthorn, Chuck, Sinks, Store-Caps, Hustle-cap." Of football, it will be observed, there is no mention; nevertheless it was played, though not in very good repute. Fives, of course, was then played between the buttresses of the Chapel, the favourite time being before eleven-o'clock school, when a ring of spectators would assemble to watch good players. As every one knows, the pepper-box of the modern fives court takes its origin from the stone termination of the steps leading up to the

¹ This list is the one given in *Nugae Etonenses*.

Chapel door, which was copied in the first regular fives court built at Eton in 1847.

It would seem that the old Eton authorities, whilst not disapproving of games, did not attach any very considerable importance to them. In theory, indeed, boating on the Thames was forbidden, but in practice even Keate tolerated the joys of the river, though he made violent efforts to prevent any rowing before Easter, in order to prevent the boys from catching chills.

In the 'forties of the last century foot races and the three-mile steeplechase, with its almost impossible jumps and immersions, were a source of considerable interest just before Easter. The winter games were then football and hockey, the latter of which, however, only held its ground for a time, during which it was patronised by many of the swells. There was then a tradition, which still seems to exist, that it had been from time to time forbidden as dangerous; nevertheless it was played for years without either injury or any reprimand. The sticks were not rough, but smoothed and artificially bent, with blades about a foot long. There were two clubs, called upper and lower hockey; but football gradually superseded it, and the game entirely disappeared about the year 1853. With regard to the prohibition, a writer mentions (in 1832) hockey and football as the chief winter games at Eton, and says that more came away "hobbling" from the latter than from the former, but speaks further on of a boy having

in his room "an illegal hockey-stick." He observes that this fine old game had died out in England, except at Eton and Sandhurst, and adds quaintly: "It is one of the most elegant and gentlemanly exercises, being susceptible of very graceful attitudes, and requiring great speed of foot."

As time went on, athletics began to exercise more and more influence, till in the 'sixties they attained to much the same preponderant position as they hold at Eton to-day. A few, however, viewed the growing worship of skilfully trained brute force with unconcealed dislike. In the early 'seventies of the last century a little magazine, called the *Adventurer*, contained an article signed E. G. R. called "Eton as it is," which scathingly attacked the growing deification of muscle rather than brain :—

"While in the world around us, for which we are here preparing ourselves, a vast worship of intellect universally prevails, at Eton it is the worship of the body which enslaves the whole community. What, in our estimation, is mind, intellect, hard and successful cultivation of the faculties? Nothing. What is cricket, rowing, athletics, football? Everything. And our School is meanwhile being degraded almost to the level of an Athletic Club. . . . Idleness holds sway everywhere, and *such* idleness! As a man who has never had dealings with the Chinese can have but a faint idea of what swindling is, so a man who has never been at Eton has but a poor conception of what idleness is."

This protest was not, however, well received by the school, the *Adventurer* being expelled from

the rooms of “Pop,” which, curiously enough, on its foundation in 1811 by Charles Fox Townshend as a political and literary society, had only elected the captain of the boats in order to show that the members *had no prejudice* against athletics.

Its tone was distinctly Conservative. Fourteen years later, in Mr. Gladstone’s day, only one member, a Colleger, was suspected of having Liberal tendencies. Originally “Pop” was located in the upper room of Mother Hatton’s “sock shop.” In 1846, when the house, together with another, was formed into Drury’s, “Pop” migrated to the yard of the old Christopher. The site of Drury’s is now covered by part of that huge and incongruous building—the “Memorial Hall.”

The early members of “Pop,” it is curious to find, were originally known as the Literati, their first debate, held on February 9, 1811, dealing with the question of whether the passage of the Andes by Pizarro or the passage of the Alps by Hannibal was the greater exploit. No political event within fifty years was permitted as a subject for debate. Mr. Gladstone, who was elected a member in 1825, made his maiden speech before this Society, the subject being “Is the Education of the Poor on the whole Beneficial?”

The future Prime Minister took great pains to improve himself as an orator, going, it is said, to rehearse his “Pop” speeches in Trotman’s gardens, on the site of which the old fives courts were afterwards built. To the end of his days

he continued to take great interest in the "Eton Society." His correspondence as to its records, in which every speaker has written his speech, has been amusingly described by Lord Rosebery, who on succeeding the great statesman in office one day received a letter in which the Grand Old Man expressed himself much distressed because during a recent visit to the rooms of "Pop" he had seen a picture of a recent Derby winner over the chimney-piece. A generation, wrote Mr. Gladstone, which had such depraved tastes could not, in his opinion, be fitted to have the custody of the invaluable records of the Eton Society, and he therefore begged Lord Rosebery to address the authorities at Eton on the subject. The state of affairs of which Mr. Gladstone complained, did not cause the recipient of his appeal so much disquiet, for the Derby winner which hung over the "Pop" mantelpiece was Lord Rosebery's own horse, Ladas, which won the great classic race in 1894.

Lord Rosebery, who, even in his Eton days, was a most effective debater, is another member of "Pop" who has risen to high distinction. Retaining a singularly keen interest in everything connected with his old school, he it was who made the most eloquent and witty speech at the dinner in the Memorial Hall, where, on July 14, 1911, 400 Etonians, the vast majority old members of "Pop," met to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Society's foundation. In the aforesaid

speech he very happily described "Pop" as being a noble companionship like the Garter, not always given for merit, but a high companionship with illustrious tradition to which anybody might be proud to belong.

Though athleticism has now in a great measure dominated the "Eton Society," it must be confessed, as another distinguished old Etonian, Lord Curzon, said at the same dinner, that neither title, means, nor athletic distinction *per se* ever enabled a man to get inside the walls of "Pop." There must be something else—he must be what the world calls "a good sort," and it is well that this happy state of affairs still remains unchanged. On the same occasion Lord Curzon pointed out that Eton had laid a vigorous hand on India, six out of the last seven Viceroys having been old Eton boys, whilst that illustrious veteran Lord Roberts was also an old Etonian.

In the course of the nineteenth century the importance of the captain of the boats has gradually grown, and at the present day his personality dominates Eton. He occupies a unique position, being envied and admired by the Upper part of the school and regarded as a sort of superior being by Lower boys.

When, about half a century ago, a Royal Commission was taking evidence as to the state of affairs prevailing at Eton, it was elicited in evidence that "the captains of the boats and the eleven were scarcely ever distinguished in scholarship or mathe-

matics." One master indeed declared that he had "not observed any boys, during a short experience, distinguished both in intellect and athletic pursuits." Young Lord Boringdon, himself one of the "eight" for two years, was "afraid that the crews of the boats were generally distinguished for want of industrious habits." Cricket the Commission pronounced to have been found "hardly compatible with high scholarship." Although the Collegers formed the larger proportion of the oldest boys in the school, they were seldom in the eleven, because they were unwilling to spare so much time from the school work as was considered necessary for practice.

In my own Eton days, thirty years ago, the captain of the school — head of Sixth Form — was nobody at all in the eyes of the Oppidans. Few of them indeed knew him by sight, and fewer still felt any curiosity to do so. As far as I remember he enjoyed no particular privileges except the right of presenting a new Headmaster with a birch tied up with ribbon of Eton blue. The captain of the Oppidans held a slightly better position, a sort of idea prevailing that there must have been something extraordinary about him or he would not have risen so high in the school, Oppidans as a rule not being generally considered very clever or apt to work.

Next to the captain of the boats in popular estimation came the captain of the eleven, who in his own circle commanded a good deal of attention,

and of course stood infinitely higher than any boy distinguished only for intellectual attainments. The members of the eight and eleven followed after, together with a few other “swaggers,” who on account of their prowess at football, rackets, running, fives, and sometimes even rifle shooting, were regarded with a certain degree of reverential awe.

Of late years, however, a more satisfactory state of affairs has prevailed, not a few prominent athletes and oarsmen having shown considerable mental capacity.

IX

ROWING AND GAMES

THE early history of Eton rowing is somewhat obscure, but it is perfectly clear that the Oppidans have always had control of all rowing arrangements. In former times, indeed, Collegers only boated below Bridge, and were rarely seen above; indeed if they did go up stream they were more than likely to be molested by Oppidans, who claimed that part of the river as their own watery domain.

Though boating must have gone on at Eton ever since the foundation of the College, there would appear to have been no attempt at a regular organisation till the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1762 there were three long boats, the "Snake," the "Piper's Green," and "My Guineas Lion." Then, as now, a captain of the boats presided over the crews. In the early days of Keate's reign (1811-1814), however, there seem to have been six boats—one 10-oar (the "Monarch," as now), three 8-oars, and two 6-oars, later on changed to four 8-oars and one 6-oar. At that time, as has been the case in later years, the

"Monarch," though it stood first on the list, and took precedence of all the other boats, was by no means the best manned, being, as has been the case in later years, something of a refuge for swagger boys who might not be exceptionally fine oars. For this reason, though it was scarcely regarded with contempt, yet it could never either be looked up to as affording a pattern for the other crews. A place in it, however, was a good thing to be secured.

In 1829¹ the Upper boats were the "Monarch," "Britannia," and "Etonian"; the Lower, "Victory," "Thetis," "Defiance," "St. George," and "Dreadnought." The "Thetis," it should be added, replaced the "Hibernia," which disappeared as the "Trafalgar" had done. In 1830, however, one of the Lower boats was called the "Nelson." At that time, it should be added, the Lower boats were made up of Lower boys and Fifth Form indiscriminately. The revival of the "Nelson" in 1830 was due to a revolt of the Lower boys in a dame's house against the Fifth Form, which ended in the former putting a boat on the river in order to escape compulsory cricket. The boats used were clinker built, and either gig or wherry fashion, the eights mostly of the former. They

¹ Those interested in this period should not fail to read *Eton in 1829-1830*, a translation of a boating diary written in Greek by Thomas Selwyn. The translator and editor, the present Provost of Eton, Dr. Warre, D.D., M.V.O., well known to several generations of Etonians as Assistant and Headmaster, did more than any one else to improve Eton rowing.

had rowlocks, but not outriggers, and must have been heavy as compared with modern clinker-built eights. The oars were of the old type, square loomed, with a button nailed on.

The original practice in the Lower boats was to employ watermen (known as "cads") as strokes and steerers. Jack Haverley, for instance, who in 1861 became the head waterman employed by the school, steered the "Defiance" as late as 1830. Another old custom practised on great occasions was for each boat to have in it some visitor to Eton. When, as sometimes happened, the honoured guest chanced to be a demure gentleman in black, he looked singularly out of place amidst the gay costumes of the crew. In old-fashioned times this "sitter," as he was called, sat in the centre of the boat to keep it steady, but in later years he reclined in the stern, usually with a large hamper of champagne in front of him, it being the custom for a sitter to make the boys a present of wine. In those far-distant days little check would seem to have been placed upon the boys indulging freely in alcohol. The writer's uncle, who as Lord Walpole steered the "Etonian" in 1830, often told of the glorious bowls of punch which he and his friends used to consume. From the account he gave, the Upper boys at least were then allowed in most respects to do pretty much as they liked.

The authorities did not in any way interfere with anything connected with boating, of the very existence of which, however, according to a

curious convention, they were supposed to be unaware. Dr. Keate indeed carried the practice of ignoring rowing to such an extent that when Eton beat Westminster at Maidenhead in 1831, he only heard of it because the news of the victory was forced upon him. Dr. Hawtrey, however, did recognise boating as an authorised institution ; nevertheless he did nothing to remove the absurd custom of regarding boys going to the river as being out of bounds. In Keate's day, as has elsewhere been said, the river was really forbidden before Easter, owing to an idea that the cold, chilly weather would produce illness amongst the boys. Some mischievous "wet bobs," taking advantage of this prohibition, in 1829 played an amusing trick on the masters. The weather just before Easter happened to be very bad, and "the water" in consequence was forbidden. Nevertheless, the boats went up until a grand capture of rebellious spirits was meditated by the authorities. By some means this purpose became known, and the wags masked and dressed up eight "cads" to represent Upper boys. They had not reached Upper Hope before the scheme began to take effect. "Foolish boys ! I know you all. Come ashore," sounded from one bank. "Come here, or you all will be expelled," re-echoed from the other. At last, after a great deal of shouting and galloping, the masks were dropped and the joke explained.

In old days, on certain evenings chosen by the captain of the boats, the Upper crews had regular

feasts at Surly, known as "Duck and Green Pea" nights, where there was much conviviality, the crews being usually elated on the return journey, on which it was the custom to pull leisurely at first. As, however, they passed Boveney Church (there was then no lock) they drew in their oars, and the watermen who pulled stroke were called on for songs, which they sang solo, the boys joining in the chorus. After the watermen were dispensed with, the same customs continued. This entertainment was kept up from Boveney to the Rushes, and then the pulling was "Hard all!" for fear of being late for Absence, or, as it was then called, for fear of being "out afresh." It was on the voyage up, however, that the rivalry between the boats mostly took place; but whenever they rowed "Hard all!" silence was kept, and each boat tried to make a race of it with the one in front or behind. After the feast at Surly, songs were sung till the time when "Oars" was called, when the crews rushed off to their boats in order to get back before Lock-Up. The Lower boats, which only escorted the Upper ones up to Easy Bridge above the Rushes, met them on their return and took part in the procession down to the Bridge.

These "Duck and Green Pea" nights afterwards developed into the "Check" nights (supposed to be so called from the shirts of the rowers) which Dr. Goodford abolished in 1860. "Check" nights took place on every alternate Saturday after the 4th of June, at the end of the summer half, and to the

last the crews of the Upper boats maintained the traditional fare of duck and green peas for which Surly Hall was celebrated. The old place, which saw so many generations of Etonians swallow copious libations of champagne, though it long survived the abolition of "Check" nights, is now itself but a memory of the past, having been pulled down in 1902.

In former days, on such evenings as boat-racing had taken place, Eton was very lively indeed, the crews on their way home stopping to drink the winners' healths at the Christopher, and then walking down arm-in-arm until they reached the school, where a crowd had collected. As in later times, the winners were "hoisted" and carried along by the wall amidst cheers. Windsor Bridge was then the winning-post of all races, the starting-point as a rule, it would appear, the Firework Eyot, which in old maps figures as Cooper's Ait. The races, it should be added, were always for money, a good part of which in all probability was spent in drink.

The 4th of June and Election Saturday were celebrated by the Procession of Boats in gala dress and by fireworks from the Eyot. Previous to 1814 all the rowers in each boat had a fancy dress appropriate to the boat. In after years the crews wore blue jackets with anchors embroidered on the outside arm, clad in which they pulled all the way up to Surly. In 1828 checked shirts were introduced, and this fashion has continued ever since. On special days the boats had tillers fashioned as

serpents, and garlanded with oak leaves, instead of the ordinary wooden tiller or the rudder lines and yokes which they used in the races. On the 4th of June and on Election Saturday the crews donned a special costume, the main features of which were a dark-blue jacket with brass buttons, hanging loose in front in order to show the distinctive pattern of the shirt, over which the silken handkerchief worn round the neck hung. Up to about 1828 the coxswains of boats on such great days wore fancy costumes, but after that date every coxswain was dressed as a naval officer, increasing in rank according to the precedence to which his boat was entitled, and this custom is still followed on the 4th of June. A somewhat curious coincidence in connection with the boats is that Lord Rosebery, Lord St. Aldwyn, and Lord Coventry in their Eton days all rowed bow in the *Monarch*—the ten-oar which seems always to have been one of the boats.

The great event for Eton oarsmen was formerly the annual race against Westminster, which in the early part of the nineteenth century excited the greatest interest. The proceedings in connection with the selection of the eight which was to try conclusions with the London school provoked much the same interest and enthusiasm as that now evoked with regard to the Eton crew to be sent to Henley. The series of contests with Westminster seems to have commenced in 1829 with a race for £100 a side. A regular course of training was always undergone, and for a number of years the

match was the great event of the summer half. As time went on, however, it was discontinued, though revived in 1860 as part of certain concessions made by the then headmaster, Dr. Goodford, in consideration of the abolition of "Check" nights and "Oppidan Dinner."

"Oppidan Dinner" was a survival of the eighteenth century, and seemingly originated at the old Christopher. In later days, however, it was held at the White Hart at Windsor, the number of boys sitting down being usually about fifty, each of whom paid something like eighteen shillings a head, which charge included wine. The time for this dinner was at the end of the summer half, and those who took part in it were members of the Upper boats' eleven and Sixth Form and a few other Upper boys. The captain of the boats managed everything, and sat at the head of the long table in a room which stretched right through the inn, one end looking out upon the castle. The dinner began at four in the afternoon, an adjournment to Eton taking place for six o'clock Absence, after which, about 6.30, the boys returned to the White Hart for what was called "dessert," though every one expected to drink rather than to eat. The chief show on the table consisted of decanters and glasses, all of a very cheap sort, it being well understood that few would survive the wholesale breakage which almost invariably followed the annual feast. Toasts were then given, the captain of the boats rising first of

all to propose "The Queen." This was drunk standing, amidst an accompaniment of cheers. "The Prince of Wales and the rest of the Royal Family" followed, after which the boys waited eagerly for the toasts which had more immediate reference to their own particular interests and the songs which formed part of the evening's programme. The proceedings invariably closed with "Floreat Etona," the drinking of which was the signal for breaking up. This toast not unnaturally evoked wild enthusiasm, and at one time it was the custom for every one to fling their glasses down and dash them to pieces on the table. About half-past eight the diners returned to Eton in very hilarious mood, the captain of the boats and other popular athletes being generally subjected to a very enthusiastic "hoisting."

The Eton authorities, though perfectly aware of this somewhat Bacchanalian feast, never took any notice of it till it was abolished in 1860. As, however, old drinking customs decreased, it became clear that Oppidan Dinner was destined to disappear, and its existence was threatened years before it was done away with. It was notorious that as a result of this banquet a number of boys came to Absence in a very fuddled condition, and the headmaster, when calling over the names, had to keep his eyes well fixed on the list for fear of seeing behaviour of which he would have been obliged to take notice. At Lock-Up time things were worse still, and of the reeling crowd who

surged down the High Street some occasionally became so violent that it took six or seven boys to get them to bed.

The last Oppidan Dinner of 1859, however, was by all accounts the most sober on record. Indeed an aged waiter at the White Hart was moved almost to tears at the small amount which had been drunk. Those who took part in it were of more serious disposition and mind than their rollicking predecessors of former days, and most people agreed that the dinner had become an anachronism. When, however, in the following year R. H. Blake-Humfrey, captain of the boats, in unison with the present Provost, Mr. Warre (who had then just come to Eton as a master), concurred in its suppression, not a few were taken by surprise, whilst many an old Etonian of the old school shook his head and murmured that Eton was going to the dogs.

In return for the abolition of "Oppidan Dinner" and "Check" nights, it was agreed that the eight should be allowed annually to row at Henley, whilst "boating bills" were instituted so as to put aquatics on the same footing as cricket with respect to exemptions from six o'clock Absence. It was also laid down that, on days in the summer half when there was no five o'clock school, the crews of two eight oars should be excused from "Absence" on condition of their undertaking to row to within sight of Cookham Lock. The "strokes" of the two boats were made responsible, on their words of

honour, to see that the conditions were fulfilled. In addition to this, the whole of the High Street, as far as Windsor Bridge, was placed within bounds, so that boys going to the "Brocas" or returning from it were no longer obliged to "shirk" when they met masters. Finally the annual boat race with Westminster was to be revived. That very year a race was duly rowed between Eton and Westminster at Putney, in which Eton won very easily. There was, however, nothing extraordinary about this, for since the old days when Eton and Westminster had been rival schools the former had greatly increased in size. Westminster had in reality barely a chance, for it had been only with considerable difficulty that an eight had been got together at all. Though some of the Westminster oars were good men, the crews that rowed against Eton from 1860 to 1864 were entirely outmatched in weight and strength. In addition to which, in 1861 and 1862 the Eton eight possessed a tower of strength in their captain and stroke, Mr. R. H. Blake-Humfrey, who, it should be added, has, in his introduction to the *Eton Boating Book*, given such a clear and excellent account of the early history of Eton rowing. The race between the two schools did not take place in 1863; instead, the Westminster boys came down to Eton on Election Saturday and had supper with the Eton crews in the meadow opposite Surly Hall. Rowing back to Windsor, the visitors very nearly became involved in what might have been a serious catastrophe, for

the cox of the Westminster eight, not being used to the river, steered the wrong side of the posts above Boveney Lock, and but for the warning shout of the steerer of the Eton eight, the Westminster boat would probably have gone over the Weir. The match of 1864, in which Eton won by 27 seconds, was the last occasion upon which the two eights met. Since then the schools have developed in different directions, with the result that the old cordial relations are now in all probability for ever at an end.

Modern Eton has produced several famous oarsmen—notably Mr. S. D. Muttelbury, whose first triumph was winning the “Lower boy pulling” with S. S. Sharpe in 1881. The present boating colours are the Eight, Upper Boat Choices, Upper Boats, Lower Boat Choices, Lower Boats, the latter of which all adopted the old Defiance colour in 1885. For this and other information I have to thank Mr. F. F. V. Scrulton, the present captain of the boats.

Swimming has always been in great favour with Eton boys, but in old days the authorities paid no attention to it, and no effort was made to check boys who could not swim from risking their lives. There appears, however, to have been some regular bathing-place as long ago as 1529, for it is chronicled that in that year a boy was drowned at “le watering place,” the site of which, however, is unknown. The first teacher apparently was a Frenchman named Champeau, nicknamed by the boys Slipgibbet, who about 1829 taught swimming

with corks, which state of affairs continued till all unauthorised teachers of natation were swept away. Champeau, also playfully known as Shampoo, gave his lessons at the spot opposite to "Athens." The old Frenchman must have been a competent teacher, for three miles was often accomplished by some of his pupils, and headers off Windsor Bridge were not uncommon. Nevertheless, fatal accidents intermittently occurred. In the early part of the nineteenth century a boy was drowned close to Boveney Meads, in the presence of many big schoolfellows, of whom not one could dive to bring up the body, though it could be plainly seen by those who stooped over the sides of the boats—fortunately at that time broad of beam, otherwise more boys would probably have perished. Sixty or seventy years earlier young Barnard (afterwards Dr. Barnard, Headmaster and Provost) had only escaped a watery grave owing to the successful efforts of his schoolfellow, Jacob Bryant, a delicate boy but a good swimmer. In later years Bryant became a scholar and philologist well in advance of his age. The average of deaths from drowning was once, it is said, about one boy in three years. This bad state of affairs was ended in 1840 when George Augustus Selwyn, with William Evans, organised swimming and instituted the "passing" at "Cuckoo Weir," which has now become one of the regular features of a "wet bob's" career.

The Upper Collegers at one time bathed at the oak in the playing fields, the Lower at a spot not

far away, which bore the significant name of "Deadman's Hole." Near by was the old wharf, done away with in 1840, where the Collegers used to keep their boats. In those days, however, they went but little on the river, preferring to concentrate their energies in preparing for the annual matches at cricket and football with the Oppidans. The rivalry was then very keen, and in winter was even shown by fierce snowball fights, in which both sides often suffered severely. It may seem strange that seventy boys could face six hundred, but some of the biggest boys in the school were Collegers, as they were not superannuated until they were nineteen.

About 1828 the annual matches, both at cricket and football, between the Oppidans and Collegers were done away with. They were always the most stoutly contested games of the year, and put both parties on their mettle far beyond the excitement of any other match. A good deal of bitterness was sometimes displayed, and now and then a smack on the head or a designed "shin" were given and received; but, on the whole, these matches did something to draw Oppidans and Collegers together, and their abolition is to be deplored, though, in the present age, the great excess of Oppidans would, it must be confessed, have rendered their continuance difficult.

Of all the various contests which formerly took place between Collegers and Oppidans the annual match at the wall on St. Andrew's Day alone

survives, and has lost none of its interest, though the two elevens are chosen from seventy Collegers and from close on a thousand Oppidans. In reality the chances of victory are in a great degree equalised owing to the fact that whilst the Collegers have every opportunity of playing the game during the whole of the time—usually about six years—during which they remain at Eton, only a small number of Oppidans play at all till within two years of their leaving school. It would here be superfluous to enter upon any detailed description of the game. Suffice it to say that it is played within a narrow strip of ground some twenty feet wide and close up against the old wall built in 1717, the goals being the tree with a white mark at the end towards Slough, and the door of Weston's Yard at the Eton end. The origin of this peculiar form of football is very obscure. Mr. E. C. Benthall, K.S., Keeper of the Wall in the present year, 1911, who has most obligingly furnished me with some interesting information, believes that it originated from "passage football," and doubts if it was ever played very seriously till about one hundred years ago, at which time it was an entirely different game from what it is now. In spite of its quaint terms, it would seem to be of no great antiquity, at least in anything like its present form. The wall itself dates from 1717, but about the earliest record of any regular game there dates from the first decade of the nineteenth century, at which time any one who

chose seems to have been allowed to play, with the result that there were usually eighteen or twenty a side. It was then practically the only form of football popular at Eton, though occasionally something approaching to the modern "Field Game" was played in the open. Till 1841, however, such forms of relaxation were discouraged by the masters. Nevertheless, on the piece of grass between the path and the river in Lower Club the Collegers, up till about 1863, played a variety known as "Lower College." This was probably a link between the field and wall games, for it had "shies" and "goals." In early days the wall game was played on a much wider strip of ground than is at present the case. The bully was not its essential feature, and the ball was often run down the whole length of the wall. Sixty years or so ago matches of Dames v. Tutors were occasionally played, and during one of these the ball somehow was pitched right on the top of the wall, along which it ran for some eight yards before coming to a dead standstill on the top.

The rules were then, of course, more elastic than those now in use, and since they were drawn up in 1849 the game has undergone various minor changes, including the curtailment of the space at the wall to its present limits and the toleration (about 1851) of "furking" the ball back in calx.

At one time considerable savagery seems to have been displayed by the rival teams, in con-

sequence of which Dr. Hawtrey once suspended all play for three weeks, and in 1851 it was actually proposed to abolish the annual match on St. Andrew's Day on account of the ill-feeling which was said to be engendered between Oppidans and Collegers. Of late years, however, the historic contest is remarkable for the good-humour shown by both sides. A quaint figure at the annual match from 1847 up to 1888, the year before he fell ill, was old Powell, whose old-fashioned velvetreen coat and high top-hat were survivals of another age. During his long superintendence of the wall he had seen many generations of Collegers and Oppidans contending for goals and shies. After ten years of confinement and suffering he died in 1899.

The wall game is as different from any other form of football as it is possible to imagine. To one unacquainted with its intricacies, nothing can be more curious than the bully close up against the wall, and the efforts of those forming it to prevent kicks sending the ball out—that is to say, beyond the line marked as the limit within which play takes place. The rules really amount to a sort of complicated creed, which has been handed on from one generation of Collegers to another. A good deal of the game is mystifying to a spectator unacquainted with its intricacies. A “calx bully,” for instance, is highly difficult to explain, whilst the necessary preliminaries for a “shy” at goals are often, owing to the confusion

of the struggle, visible only to the umpire. The summit of a wall-player's ambition is to throw a "goal," which feat, in the annual St. Andrew's Day match, has only been accomplished three times within the last hundred years—in every case by a Colleger. W. Marcon threw one in 1842, when College won by a goal and 19 shies, 17 of which were got by H. Phillott in rapid succession. H. J. Mordaunt, captain of the eleven in 1886, threw another in 1885, when he hit the door just at the bottom. The name of this fine athlete, the writer (who knew him at Eton) is informed, is still a household word in College, where his goal is held in greater reverence than that scored in 1909. Mordaunt's was an unaided effort, whilst the latter seems to have been rather lucky. Nevertheless, Finlay and Creasy deserved the greatest credit for their presence of mind. In 1858, it should be added, a throw by Hollingworth was disputed.

Though of all pastimes the wall game is least adapted for summer, time-honoured usage prescribed—and after a discontinuance for four years now once again prescribes—that at six o'clock on the morning of Ascension Day a mixed team of Collegers and Oppidans should meet at the "Wall." The origin of this custom I have been unable to ascertain. Like the game played on the last evening of last summer half, it probably took its rise from boyish enthusiasm.

In connection with the wall game, the name

of James Kenneth Stephen—the gifted J. K. S., who in his prime was so unfortunately snatched away by death—will never be forgotten. Captain of the College team in 1876-1877, he was a great supporter of “*noster ludus muralis*,” as he has left on record in his “*Quo Musa Tendis*,” one stanza of which runs—

There's another wall with a field beside it,
A wall not wholly unknown to fame,
For a game's played there which most who've tried it
Declare is a truly noble game.

College, it is pleasant to know, seems unlikely ever to forget this true son of Eton, for on the evening of St. Andrew's Day each of the wall team in turn drinks “*In piam memoriam, J. K. S.*,” every raising of the cup as it is passed around being followed by a cheer.

A brilliant young contemporary of J. K. S. who played at the wall in 1880 is happily still left to us. This is Mr. A. C. Benson, whose fine intellect and delightful achievements in the fields of literature have rendered his name well known to that greater public which joins with Etonians in admiration of his work.

College may well be proud of having produced two such men as these.

Till the middle of the fifties in the last century the wall game was also played at the red brick wall in front of the boys' entrance to the house which about 1790 was built overlooking the Timbralls. For nearly a quarter of a century after

play had ceased to take place there, the calces marked in chalk could still be discerned. The field game is a rather modern institution. As has before been said, ordinary football does not seem to have been very popular amongst Etonians of a hundred years ago, though in the last century it gradually rose in favour. A curious character of other days was old Strugnal, who was celebrated for tightening the bladder of a football by means of blowing through a piece of tobacco pipe placed in his mouth. On the whole, the annals of Eton football, a primitive form of which in the eighteenth century was known as "goals," with the exception of some exciting house matches, do not possess any great interest.

Cricket, unlike football, was popular at Eton over two hundred years ago, having been played as early as 1706, and in high favour in Horace Walpole's day. About the first great Etonian cricketer was the eighth Lord Winchilsea, who afterwards became chief patron of the famous Hambledon Club. At one time he made an attempt to introduce an innovation by increasing the stumps to four, but the change was never popular, though in the match between the Gentlemen and Players in 1837, in order to equalise the contest, the latter undertook to defend four stumps instead of three. In 1751 three matches for £1500 were played between the Gentlemen of England and Eton College, Past and Present; the former won the stakes, winning two out of the

three matches. The players were dressed in silk jackets, trousers, and velvet caps. In 1791 Lord Winchilsea made 54 runs in a contest between Old Etonians *versus* the Gentlemen of England. This was played at old "Lord's," where Dorset Square now stands. In the same year the school beat the Maidenhead Club by four wickets. Keate was one of the seven Collegers playing, and scored 0 and 4, while in the second innings Way "nipped himself out" for 11. Five years later a match seems to have taken place against Westminster on Hounslow Heath, in defiance of the Headmaster's strict orders; it resulted in the defeat of Eton and the flogging of all the Eleven!

In those days there was a good deal of jollity in connection with the cricket in the playing fields, and the boys were allowed to do many things which would be thought very reprehensible to-day. Up to about 1827, for instance, a beer tent used to be allowed when cricket matches were played. Two or three years later Eton cricket for some reason or other admittedly deteriorated, a disastrous state of affairs which was thus explained by one of the "cads" who used to hover about the shooting fields: "Lord, sir, they never has won a match since the beer tent got the sack, and never will no more." This tent, where "beer and baccy" were the order of the day before it gave offence to the higher powers, was kept, at every match, by the veteran Jem Miller for the accommodation of

the "cads," Broconalian Club, and other loungers, and loudly and lustily did they cheer the boys with their stentorian lungs. It was from this tent that one of the best bowlers and batters Eton ever produced—in after years a prominent divine at King's—was encouraged by the deafening shouts of "Goo it, my dear Harding; goo it, my dear boy," when he scored 86 runs off his own bat against Messrs. Ward, Vigne, Tanner, and others of the Epsom Club. It was on this memorable day, too, that he made a tremendous hit over the shooting-field trees, high in the air, of course, when a bargeman from the tent, lost in amazement at the hit, thundered out, "There she goes for Chessy [Chertsey] Church, by Jingo!" it being a prominent mark on the river for the bargees.

According to all accounts, cricket in those less strenuous days was not taken any too seriously. Boys did not change their clothing to play it, though they did so for football. Once during a match in Upper Club a fight was reported to be going on in the playing fields, and in a few minutes gentlemen, spectators, and cricketers not actually playing scampered over Sheep's Bridge, eager to witness the contest. Formerly tea in Upper Club was made by fags. The well-known cries of "Water boils!" "Make tea!" originated during this now obsolete state of affairs.

Though all Bacchanalian gaiety had disappeared from the playing fields by the middle of the last century, a somewhat free-and-easy spirit still

prevailed, and on the occasion of school matches there was usually a good deal of fun, especially when Billy Boland—a celebrated character and *bon vivant* of the past, who was supposed to have been the original of Fred Bayham in Thackeray's novel of *The Newcomes*—was present. He it was who once, after lunch during a cricket match between the school and I Zingari, presented Dr. Hawtrey, the then headmaster, with the Freedom of the Club in a deal box, and wound up a mock speech with the toast: "Floreat Etona et vivat 'Nitidissimus' Hawtrey!" This was peculiarly appropriate, for with his velvet-collared coat the Doctor was the smartest of men and wore the best-varnished boots in the world.

The first regular match played by Eton against a public school appears to have taken place in 1799, when an Eton eleven met Westminster at old Lord's. On this occasion Eton in their innings made only 47 runs. Westminster then went in and scored 13, when the stumps were drawn, with five wickets to fall. The match was said to be "post-poned," but there is no account to be found of its ever having been resumed. Next year Eton had an easy victory, making a score of 213 in one innings, against Westminster's 54 and 31. Curiously enough, the Collegers at that time constituted the strength of the eleven and made the biggest scores. Benjamin Drury, afterwards an assistant master, Joseph Thackeray, and Thomas Lloyd, elder brother of the bishop, were the

bowlers. Poor Lloyd, who beat the Westminster innings off his own bat, died after the holidays from the effects of a chill which he caught during the match. This would seem to have been the last match with Westminster.

The first Eton and Harrow contest took place in 1805 at Lord's, when Eton won in a single innings. On this occasion Byron made 7 and 2 for the beaten school. Eight of the winning eleven (among whom was Lord Stratford de Redcliffe) were King's scholars. After this no authentic record exists of any match till 1818, when Harrow beat Eton. Apparently the whole thing was rather a fiasco; only two of the best Eton men were present at Lord's, the rest of the eleven being made up of such Etonians as could be collected on the ground. In the following year, however, Eton beat Harrow in one innings; in 1822 Harrow beat Eton. In 1832 Eton scored a great triumph, beating Harrow and Winchester each in one innings. The match of 1841 was remarkable for the great innings of Emilius Bayley, who made 153, up to then the highest score ever achieved by any player in a public school match. Oddly enough, however, that same year Eton was beaten hollow by Winchester. In 1846 Eton repeated the great performance of 1832 and again vanquished Harrow and Winchester each in a single innings. One of the eleven on this occasion was J. W. Chitty (in after life the Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Chitty), who played

four years for Eton, in the last of which—1847—he was captain of the eleven.

A great character well known to Eton cricketers of the forties was M'Niven minor, who, Mr. Coleridge declares, in his interesting recollections, was in Sixth Form, the football team, and the eight, as well as in the eleven. Commonly called "Snivey," this fine athlete seems to have been very notorious for his wild eccentricities and oddities of dress, which, however, in nowise impaired a universal popularity.

During the fifties of the last century Eton cricket was not in a very flourishing state. The smart thing was to be in the boats, and "dry-bobs" were rather looked down upon till 1860, when a strenuous effort began to be made to end the long series of reverses which the school had sustained in its annual matches against Harrow. The engagement of a professional cricketer and improvements in Upper Club aroused great interest, and so much excitement was the result that when in that year Eton made rather a good fight at Lord's, all sorts of absurd rumours were born of the indignation provoked by defeat. It was said, for instance, that Daniel, the Harrow captain, was really a professional in disguise—this was because he wore whiskers and a straw hat!

In 1861, when the late Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell, who afterwards as a master did so much for Eton cricket, was captain, the match was unfinished, and only in the next year did Eton

score its first victory against Harrow since 1850. The finish (like that of 1910) gave rise to much excitement, and feeling ran very high, both sides indulging in merciless chaff. The report that the Harrow headmaster—Dr. Butler—had shortly before issued an order that all side-pockets were to be sewn up, with a view to prevent slouching, gave the Eton boys an opportunity of which they were not slow to take advantage, and accordingly the ground resounded with yells of "Pockets" throughout the day. The hero of the day was A. S. Teape, whose bowling did so much to win the match, at the close of which he was accorded an enthusiastic ovation. A large proportion of the spectators were quite carried away by excitement, and several fights took place between members of the rival schools, whilst two well-known Eton and Harrow "cads," both pretty well "sprung," started a little mill on their own account, much to the amusement of the onlookers. Probably the encounter was a prearranged affair, for the old rascals took good care not to hurt each other, and reaped a considerable harvest by sending the hat round afterwards. One of the winning team that year was Mr. Alfred Lubbock, the great Eton cricketer who became captain in 1863, in which year he made the magnificent score of 174, not out, against Winchester. Every old Etonian should read the book written by him some little time ago, one chapter of which was contributed

by his son, Mr. Robin Lubbock, K.S., a member of the eleven of 1896-1897. A young man of high promise, he most unfortunately met with an early death through a sad accident in the hunting-field. The names of Lubbock, Lyttelton, and Studd will always be associated with the history of Eton cricket. For six successive years—1861 to 1866—there was always a Lubbock in the eleven, whilst three Lytteltons (one of whom was the present Headmaster) played at Lord's in 1872, and three Studds in 1877.

In former days there was often much rowdiness after an Eton and Harrow match, which, for some unknown reason, seemed to send a certain amount of hot-blooded youngsters almost mad. In the early eighties of the last century the present writer witnessed a curious development of this spirit. Returning to Eton in the evening after the match was over, he found himself in a railway carriage filled with a number of boys he did not know, together with one old Etonian, apparently a newly joined subaltern of some cavalry regiment. For a little time after the train had started the party more or less calmly discussed the match, but all of a sudden the old Etonian, who was in a most excited state, began to smash up the carriage, tearing down the hat-racks and breaking the windows, in which work of destruction he was cheerfully seconded by his companions, who eventually, when the train came to the bridge over the river near Windsor, threw most of the cushions and all the

advertisement placards, which they had wrenched off, into the river. The writer was the more struck by this scene on account of the party not in any way suggesting that he should join in it; and as a matter of fact, reading a paper and smoking (nearly every boy then smoked when going to or leaving Eton), he sat undisturbed upon the only cushion not thrown out of window. He was a very small boy at the time, and the wreckers, who were big ones, treated him throughout with great courtesy. The damage, owing to the great crowd of boys returning to Eton, was apparently not discovered by the station officials on the arrival of the train at Windsor, nor was anything heard of it afterwards by the school, though the writer has reason to believe that some other carriages were also wrecked on the same train. In all probability the authorities, aware of the impossibility of detecting the offenders, preferred to let the whole matter rest. It was a curious instance of the passion for destruction which occasionally takes possession of youth.

The first match between Eton and Winchester seems to have been played in 1826, when Winchester won. Afterwards, up to 1854, it was played at Lord's. Success was pretty evenly divided till 1845, when a tie produced great interest and excitement. In that year the late Provost, Dr. Hornby, was a member of the Eton team. In old days the Winchester boys played in tall white beaver hats, but the Etonians wore straw.

In 1856 the match was played at Winchester, neither school being allowed to come to town, and since then the elevens have met on the Eton and Winchester ground alternately.

Sixpenny, which appears to have taken its name from the Sixpenny Club, founded for Lower boys by G. J. Boudier, 1832-1838, captain of the eleven, an Etonian who is said to once have thrashed a bargee three times his own size, was formerly a much-coveted Lower boy colour. It was, however, done away with in 1898, but Upper Sixpenny is still an important cricket colour for Uppers who are also Juniors, as it is now the first colour a young cricketer can obtain at Eton, where, if you once get a name as a promising bat, bowler, or field, it is difficult to lose it, whereas if a boy does not start well, little attention is afterwards paid to him.

A curious modern Eton cricket institution is "Second Upper Club," nominally the second game in the school, but in reality consisting of Upper boys who are distinguished in the school, mostly in some other line than cricket, though a number of quite good players also belong. A few years ago some of the games played by Second Upper Club degenerated into huge "rags," ending with an early adjournment to little Brown's, whence, after a huge tea had been partaken of, every one went off to bathe.

A feature of modern Eton is "Agar's Plough," just across Datchet Lane, well laid out for the

purposes of the school games. This large tract of land was saved from the speculative builder by purchase in 1895, and here, eight years later, for the first time was played the Eton and Winchester match. As a cricket ground Agar's Plough possesses several advantages over the historic Upper Club, known in the distant past as the Upper Shooting Fields. One of the chief gains is, of course, the absence of big trees to confuse the light. Whether, however, Upper Club is discarded for school matches or not, it will always remain a hallowed spot in the recollection of old Etonians who as boys knew it in its summer glory. Full of picturesque associations and shaded by stately elms planted in the days of the Commonwealth, the beautiful old ground has seen many a generation of Eton boys pass o'er its pleasant sward of green. Besides Agar's Plough modern Eton possesses other facilities for games undreamt of in less luxurious days. Amongst these are the new racquets courts near the gasworks which in 1902-3 took the place of those down Keate's Lane.

At the present day there is no tennis at Eton, but a tennis court appears to have existed between 1600 and 1603, though, curiously enough, its site has never been ascertained. Near the new racquets courts thirty-eight new fives courts have been built since 1870.

The excellent game of fives, which has now attained a comparatively widespread popularity,

originated in the spaces between the Chapel buttresses being utilised for play. The one next the flight of steps, with its so-called pepper-box, is the model from which all modern fives courts are built. The first of these were constructed at Eton in Trotman's gardens in 1847, and enjoyed great popularity in their early days. Since, however, the number of fives courts has been largely augmented, the old courts seem to have fallen into great disrepute. In the writer's day, although such new courts as existed were naturally the most in request, boys still ran to obtain one of the old ones. It was a rule that no court could be considered taken unless there was some one actually upon it, to claim it by the right of occupancy. The consequence was that they always became the reward of the swift, or of those who were let out of school earlier than the rest; keen struggles ensued, and the stream of runners flying down Keate's Lane day after day testified to the eagerness of spirit which could prompt boys to exhaust themselves merely to obtain the chance of getting a game. It was then the custom for the boy first in a court to mark his right of possession by putting down his hat in it. The original fives court between the buttresses of the Chapel had been long unused, though there was sometimes a knock-up between Lower boys waiting to go into school.

Colours at Eton, except those of the eleven and of the eight, which in some form or other

probably existed as far back as the eighteenth century, are of modern origin. The parti-coloured scarlet and Eton blue shirt of the field only dates from 1860, and the dark blue and red of the wall from 1861. A year later saw the birth of house colours. About the same time a great craze for wearing colours on every possible occasion made itself felt. In old days boys had been supposed to shirk masters when in change clothes, but now a tendency to run into an opposite extreme produced an agitation in favour of greater laxity regarding dress. The authorities, however, rightly deeming that Eton should retain its old traditions as to tall hats and the like, stood firm, every reasonable concession having long before that date been granted. Only quite recently indeed have boys been allowed to answer their names at Absence in change clothes, an innovation which many an old Etonian, mindful of the ancient traditions of the school, must surely deplore.

This chapter cannot be concluded without some reference to the Eton Hunt, as the beagles have sometimes been facetiously called. The pack in question would appear to have first been started about 1840 under the auspices of Anstruther-Thompson, in after life one of the best-known and most popular Masters of Hounds in England. For some years later its existence was rather precarious, at times resembling that of a contemporary College pack which was once declared to consist of a single long-backed Scotch terrier.

From the earliest days of the hunt, however, there appears to have been some attempt at a regular organisation. The whips, for instance, had E.C.H. on the buttons of their coats, which Dr. Hawtrey (Edward Craven), who of course knew of the existence of the hunt, though he did not recognise it, interpreted as a delicate compliment to himself. At one time the Collegers and Oppidans each had a separate pack of their own, but these were amalgamated in 1866.

Drag hunts were formerly rather popular with the followers of the Eton beagles, and sometimes very good runs were enjoyed. One of the "cads" about the wall, known as Polly Green, an active fellow who used to go across country uncommonly well, afforded very good sport. At that time the beagles had not been recognised by the authorities, and were kept more or less secretly a good way out of bounds, in a small kennel at the corner of the Brocas near the river. Eventually, however, the pack became known to every one, including the masters, who, with great good sense, far from discouraging it, gave it encouragement and approval, and thereby raised the character of the sport whilst increasing its popularity in the school. In 1884 the mastership of Lord Newtown-Butler—now Major the Earl of Lanesborough—was particularly successful, this gallant and popular Guardsman having ever been the incarnation of geniality and good-natured fun. There is no need to deal here with the absurd agitation of so-called humanitarians

for the pack's suppression. Suffice it to say that the greatest credit is due to the present Headmaster for having refused to listen to the voice of hysterical sentimentalism. May his successors be equally firm !

X

YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

THE old type of Eton Masters and Fellows is now practically extinct, but thirty or forty years ago quite a number of them were still flourishing. Not a few were quaint and eccentric figures both in their appearance and their ways. About the quaintest of all was the Rev. F. E. Durnford, universally known as "Judy," who was Lower master from 1864 to 1877. He has been aptly described as "a sort of Ancient Mariner in academic garb," for he had a strange weather-beaten aspect, the result, no doubt, of having for many years battled with successive hordes of impish Lower boys—"nahty, nahty boys," as he called them—much of whose time was occupied in giving the good old man all the trouble they could. Mr. Durnford, though he could never master the pronunciation of French, was somewhat fond of interlarding Gallicisms in his discourse, which, of course, never failed to arouse unbridled merriment. He himself was perfectly aware of his imperfections as a linguist, and would at times attempt to allay such outbursts by the somewhat pathetic

remark, "Ah, boys, it's my misfortune, not my fault." He was a very good-natured old man, whose main failing perhaps was being inclined towards an excess of leniency, in which respect his successor, the Rev. J. L. Joynes, erred far less.

This pedagogue, though the most kindly of men, would stand no nonsense. Many will remember him in Lower School, with the picturesque interior of which, full of old woodwork cut with the names of vanished generations, his personality accorded so well. He had rather a peculiar voice, and pronounced words like "tutor" and "nuisance," "tootor" and "noosance." Rather a better preacher than most of his colleagues, his sermons in "old Lower Chapel" were sometimes marked by a certain originality which caused them to be listened to with interest and attention. In his school days "Jimmy Joynes," or "old Jimmy," as he was affectionately called, had been captain of the College team at the wall and a fine fives player, and as a master he continued to take great interest in the latter game, giving a cup to be played for by the house over which he presided before becoming Lower Master. In the latter capacity, though an extremely kind-hearted man, he could, as was well known to the boys under his charge, be severe enough upon occasion, and the writer well remembers seeing him administer what was considered a tremendous flogging to a delinquent, who afterwards had a distinguished military career. This consisted of some thirty-two cuts laid on with two

birches, to the great astonishment of a number of Lower boys present at the execution. The victim, a boy of great pluck, was little disturbed by this castigation, though it was very much more serious than most of the many floggings he had suffered before. As a matter of fact, it was only the swishings of the Lower master which inflicted any real physical pain, the few strokes which the Head, Dr. Hornby, administered being generally more in the nature of a formal reproof than anything else—at least that was the experience of the present writer, who well remembers that on retiring from the torture-chamber next Upper School he reflected that if one was to be flogged at all, the thing could not be conducted in a more pleasant and dignified way.

In his relations with the boys Dr. Hornby was ever a great gentleman, as the following incident, which occurred during the writer's Eton days, will show. Two of the sons of a celebrated potentate were then at the school, and Queen Victoria took the warmest interest in them; the eldest, in particular, was a great favourite of hers. One day, owing to some untruthfulness in connection with work, this young Prince was complained of, and though he might have got off by claiming "first fault" owing to forgetfulness, was soundly swished. At the same time he received a severe, though kindly lecture, in which the "Head" pointed out how such behaviour would pain his parents and the Queen, were it ever to

reach her ears. Curiously enough, that very evening Dr. Hornby happened to be dining at Windsor, and as usual his Royal hostess did not fail to make particular inquiry as to how her protégé was getting on. What was the surprise of the young Prince during the following morning to find himself once again summoned to the "library," and as he wended his way to the grim scene of correction, he wondered what he could have done to be whipped again so soon. All unpleasant anticipations were, however, quickly dispelled. In those gently modulated tones which so many old Etonians will remember, Dr. Hornby described how, on the previous evening, a certain great lady had asked after her favourite Eton boy, and desired to be informed as to how he had been getting on in the school. "I told you yesterday," Dr. Hornby went on to say, "that one lie always leads to another, and I am sorry to say in the present instance this adage has not failed to hold good, for," added he, "I am ashamed to say that, instead of telling Her Majesty of the disgraceful behaviour for which but a few hours before I had been obliged to punish you, I said that you were getting on very well. Under these circumstances I feel sure that you will do all you can to give no further trouble, and so, by causing my words to come true, make amends for the falsehoods which we have both of us uttered." The kindly admonition made a considerable impression upon the culprit's mind. Nevertheless, he could not help being amused when

the next Sunday, in Chapel, he heard the Doctor take as his text, "All men are liars."

In appearance Dr. Hornby was the absolutely perfect type of an Eton Headmaster. Immaculately dressed, and of fine presence, he possessed a natural dignity which even impressed boys totally lacking in reverence for all other institutions of the school. His voice, low and not unpleasant even when delivering a stern admonition, was essentially the voice of an English gentleman of the fine old school. It was a real pleasure to hear him call "Absence," owing to the dignity which he imparted to this tedious duty. Curiously enough, this Headmaster, who in his latter years, at least, might have been called the incarnation of the best kind of Eton Conservatism, had on his appointment been regarded as a Radical. The first Oppidan, I believe, ever chosen Headmaster, he had succeeded Dr. Balston in 1868, when the latter had relinquished the post from disapproval of the various innovations and changes which resulted from the recommendations of the Public School Commission, the labours of which extended over seven years.

The growing worship of athleticism was in some measure responsible for the appointment of the new Headmaster, though Dr. Hornby, besides having been in the eleven, was also a fine scholar. When he first came to Eton the school, used to the patriarchal sway of his predecessor, who had strictly followed the traditions of the past, were rather inclined to regard him as a dangerous re-

former, but before long it was realised that such Radical proclivities as the new Headmaster possessed were not very likely seriously to impair the traditional round of Eton life, and the school gradually subsided into a tranquil consciousness that nothing outrageous would be perpetrated under the new "Head," who long before his retirement grew to be far more Conservative than some of his subordinates; indeed, during his tenure of the Headmastership, which lasted sixteen years, four Assistant Masters are said to have left Eton owing to Dr. Hornby disapproving of some of their ideas. One of these exiles was young Mr. Joynes, whose socialistic tendencies obviously unfitted him for the post of an Eton master; another, Mr. Oscar Browning, whose clever and genial personality is so well known to numbers of old Etonians.

Dr. Balston remained at Eton as Vice-Provost, and I remember that we regarded him with a good deal of sympathy as having preferred to resign rather than to yield to meddling on the part of the governing body, then still looked upon as rather a new-fangled affair. During his short term of office he had refused to sanction any alterations at all. Possessed of an unlimited respect for old traditions and ways, his conception of a Headmaster was that he should exercise a sort of dignified and patriarchal sway, whilst carrying out a solemn trust to maintain things as they had always been. Whilst Head he had borne him-

self with unbending dignity, being almost never seen out of academic dress, in which, it was said, he even went to bed. The same story, I believe, had been current in the days when Dr. Goodford, familiarly known as "Old Goody," ruled the school. Some indeed declared that a gown and cassock were all he wore. As Provost, however, the latter was seen about Eton in ordinary costume and invariably carrying an umbrella. A quaint, queer figure this survivor of a past era looked with his hat at the back of his head and hands covered with unbuttoned black gloves much too big for him.

At that time the old Fellows who were still alive used to preach the most lengthy and incomprehensible sermons in Chapel, but in that line Dr. Goodford easily held his own against all. Owing to a peculiar intonation, his mouth always seemed to be full of pebbles, and it was practically impossible to make out one sentence of the vast number which trickled from his lips. Nevertheless we rather liked the good old man, whose curious sing-song induced sleep rather than irritation. Dr. Goodford's entry into Chapel with the aged verger, who on account of the silver wand he bore was called the "Holy Poker," was a thing which many Etonians will recall to mind.

Amongst the Assistant Masters of some thirty years ago, about the most conspicuous figure, owing to a long flowing beard, was the Rev. C. C. James, for some reason or other known as "Stiggins." He enjoyed no great measure of

popularity out of his house, where, it should be added, he fed his boys better than almost any other tutor or dame. At one period of his career he had narrowly escaped being thrown over Barnes Pool Bridge by a riotous party of boys, and though no one seemed to know the exact reason of this, with later generations it undoubtedly led to his being regarded with a certain rather unjust suspicion.

A far more sympathetic figure was the Rev. E. Hale, known to the boys as "Badger Hale," probably on account of his hair bearing some remote resemblance to the coat of that animal. Besides being a cleric, Mr. Hale was an officer of the Eton Volunteers. He was of great girth, and when in uniform presented a really stupendous appearance, in which the boys took great delight. At that time the Volunteers were perhaps not taken so seriously as is the present Officers' Training Corps, with its more workman-like appearance and ways. Though there were occasional field-days, the principal evolution of the 2nd Bucks was to march, headed by its band, to the playing-fields. Founded in 1860, by the late 'seventies it had abandoned a good deal of its splendours, blue worsted cord having taken the place of the original silver lace, whilst the colours presented by Mrs. Goodford had ceased to be carried, the Eton Volunteers being at that time a rifle corps. Now, however, that it has become the Officers' Training Corps, they have once more been taken into use. The silver bugle given by Lady Carrington is presumably still carried.

The chief support of the Corps has always been its present Honorary Colonel, the Rev. E. Warre, now Provost of Eton, who for many years took a most active part in striving to maintain its well-being and efficiency. Few have done so much for Eton as he ; his whole life, indeed, has been devoted to furthering the best interests of the school. As an Assistant Master he was the avowed champion of strenuousness and efficiency, whilst opposed to old ways and traditions tending towards a slack state of affairs. A strong and dominating personality, he was intensely popular with the boys in his own house, but a good part of the school regarded him with a certain amount of suspicion as entertaining revolutionary ideas, which it was said were only kept in check by the firmness of Dr. Hornby, who in the last days of his Headmastership was looked upon as the staunch defender and champion of old Eton ways. In the minds of ultra-conservative Etonians Dr. Hornby stood for Conservatism, as Dr. Warre did for change. Such an estimate was not altogether without foundation, for after Dr. Warre had succeeded to the supreme control of the school, a number of alterations, some of them, no doubt, quite necessary, were made. The general feeling amongst Eton boys at that time was Tory in the extreme, and though we knew scarcely anything about him except that he had flogged a good deal, I am sure that a great many of us would have been delighted to hear that Dr. Keate, having returned to life,

had been entrusted with the task of reorganising the school with a view to getting it back into the condition of the good old days.

On the whole the reforms made by Dr. Warre during his Headmastership seem to have produced satisfactory results. Most of them dealt with alterations in the scholastic curriculum of the school, all the old customs open to criticism, such as "Oppidan Dinner," having long disappeared. Without doubt, under his rule the boys were made to work harder than before, whilst its tone gained in manliness and vigour. At the same time the traditional spirit of Eton remained unimpaired, and before his retirement Dr. Warre, like his predecessors, had come to be considered a bulwark of Eton Conservatism.

The Headmastership of the school would appear to have a sobering tendency upon even the most advanced reformer, who at the end of his term of office has generally lost his enthusiasm for innovation and change. The present Headmaster is a case in point. When he came to Eton a few years ago many were full of gloomy forebodings as to the reforms he was about to make. Mr. Lyttelton was known to hold a number of advanced views—rumour indeed declared that he would try and force vegetarianism upon the boys and would make them wear Jaeger underclothing, for which material he was declared to have a marked partiality. On assuming office, however, he somewhat allayed these fears by giving an address in

which he announced that he was not going to stop tap, interfere with clothing, or abolish the beagles, to which he had been declared hostile. As a matter of fact, nothing could have been more loyal than his behaviour in this latter respect, for, far from discouraging the Eton Hunt, he has defended it against the ridiculous attacks of various faddists and cranks. It is, however, to be regretted that an agitator was two years ago allowed to address the school on the subject of unemployment from the Chapel steps in the school-yard. The vast majority of the parents of Eton boys do not wish their sons to be taught Socialism, and the school-yard, so closely connected with the old traditions of Eton, is the very last place where any theories of this kind should be permitted to be aired. As a matter of fact, the address, which under no circumstances could have done good, merely provoked giggling. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that in permitting such an innovation the Headmaster was merely animated by that new spirit of philanthropy and altruism which seems to have found a more useful form of expression in the Eton Mission, now, according to all accounts, doing excellent work in Hackney Wick.

All things considered, Mr. Lyttelton has been a more successful Headmaster than many old Etonians expected, and has not made any violent effort to interfere with the traditions of the school. Life at Eton, however, without doubt is now more

strenuous than of yore. Leave has been greatly curtailed, having to be taken at an appointed time. Besides this, of late a tendency seems to have arisen to exercise more control over the boys in minor matters, as to which in former days the authorities never thought of interfering. From time immemorial it has been the privilege of members of "Pop" to sit on the low wall by the trees, planted in 1753, especially on Sunday; a recent regulation forbids any boy, whether belonging to "Pop" or not, from sitting on the wall on Sunday. The reason for such a vexatious interference with an old Eton custom is difficult to divine. A more reasonable exercise of influence by the Headmaster has been his attempt to get the boys when in Chapel to abstain from keeping their hands in their pockets when standing up during the service. Such a practice is not forbidden, but an address on the subject by Mr. Lyttelton is said to have produced a great effect.

On the whole the masters of to-day would appear to possess more influence with the boys than was the case in the past. Now, as then, the most popular are those who are gentlemen—that is, using the word in its best and proper sense. At the present time, owing to the increased worship of athletics, proficiency at games is a powerful factor in a master's popularity, and genial eccentricity is also apt to cause him to be liked; but fads, on the other hand, are not attractive to boys, which makes it all the more remarkable

that the present Headmaster—a professed vegetarian—should have attained a fair measure of success in presiding over the school. No doubt his fine record as an athlete has had a good deal to do with this.

In the 'seventies of the last century the attitude of Eton boys towards the "Beaks" (they are, I understand, called Ushers now), whilst not actively hostile, was for the most part one of tolerant indifference. A few of the masters, however, were on fairly intimate terms with certain of the Upper boys, but the majority of the school knew and cared little about those responsible for its education. Respect for constituted authority has never been a salient characteristic of Eton boys, and amongst the junior members of the school at least "drawing the beaks" was then considered quite a legitimate form of amusement. A previous generation, according to all accounts, found a never-failing source of delight in lawless doings of this sort, whilst even Sixth Form occasionally took advantage of the good-nature of Dr. Hawtrey, the most urbane Headmaster, it is said, who ever wielded a birch.

Like his subordinates, he seems to have been not infrequently exposed to attempts at "drawing" by his division. These, however, he generally treated with good-humoured contempt. During one eleven-o'clock school they once all became suddenly absorbed in the contemplation of the rose from which was suspended one of

the chandeliers of Upper School, and, nudging one another, indulged in mysterious whispers, which eventually caused Hawtrey to look up and ask, “Why, whatever is the matter?” “First of April, sir,” was the reply, but the Headmaster remained unmoved, and merely murmuring, “Silly boys,” bade one of them proceed with their construing.

Dr. Hawtrey did not believe in forcing learning upon boys, and was never unduly severe with laggards. “Somebody must be last,” was a favourite consolatory remark of his when any derisive titter at the last name in an examination met his ears. During his tenure of the Headmastership there was much ease and freedom, for it was not in his nature to be a martinet.

Full of good intentions and over-politeness to the boys, it was no wonder that this pedagogue, a veritable prince amongst schoolmasters, was very popular in the school. Whatever a boy said he professed, if possible, to believe, and although his confidence was often misplaced, this course had a salutary effect in fostering and cultivating a gentlemanly spirit. At the same time his very figure was a caution to evildoers, for he had a droop in his right shoulder which was supposed to have come from a frequent and vigorous use of the birch. Among the Lower boys he was generally called “Plug,” from some peculiarity in his countenance, but the swells, by way of refinement, reversed the name and used “Gulp” instead.

The same kind of satirical humour led to their ungallantly christening his two old sisters "Elephantina" and "Rhinocerina." These ladies had a sedan-chair in which they went to parties—one of the last sedan-chairs probably used. Dr. Hawtrey had a great liking for velvet collars, fine clothes, perfumes, and gold chains; one of the school beliefs was that "Hawtrey stood up in £700," the stiff figure at which his boys assessed his studs, sleeve-links, watch and chains, gold pencil and rings.

Boys are wonderfully astute judges of whether a master will stand nonsense or not, and having discovered that a man cannot keep order, are apt to bring the art of ingenious torment to a high pitch of perfection. Old Etonians will recall the self-control and good-temper shown by certain masters who had not the knack of making their authority felt. Their divisions indulged in every kind of disorder, such as breaking out into applause at some casual comment, and at a prearranged moment commencing to stamp and sometimes even to sing. The keyholes of their class-rooms were filled with small pebbles or india-rubber, whilst various substances were put amongst the papers upon their desk. The writer well remembers the astonished look on the face of a certain master when, crawling laboriously towards him upon his desk, there appeared a poor ink-soaked tortoise, which, to the intense delight of the division, had at last accomplished the feat of climbing out of the

ink-pot, where it had surreptitiously been deposited just as school commenced.

Another master, who was very short sighted, was always having jokes played upon him just under his nose. On one occasion it was declared he had continued to dip his pen in the open mouth of a particularly torpid toad, substituted for his inkpot, till the reptile, irritated and aroused, jumped right in the middle of his face. Yet other masters, without being particularly severe, kept order without any difficulty at all, the boys instinctively realising that they would stand no nonsense. Of the perfect schoolmaster, indeed, as of the perfect poet, it may be said, "*Nascitur non fit.*"

To those men who by nature and disposition were unable to make their authority felt, school hours must have often been a time of veritable torment. Generally well-meaning men of gentle nature, when they did punish they almost invariably punished wrong or in an ineffectual manner, their usual practice being either to set some tremendous "*poena*," which they afterwards revoked, or settle upon the wrong boy, to whom in the end they were obliged to accord something very like an apology. In a few rare instances the perfectly legitimate loss of temper by a master led to very grave consequences. Goaded to fury by a long course of deliberate insubordination, some tortured tutor would at last turn upon a pupil and box his ears. Physical chastisement by a master in any form whatever was then strictly

forbidden, the infliction of corporal punishment being reserved for the Head and Lower Masters alone. The boys were perfectly aware of this, and instances occurred of grave consequences attending a well-deserved blow. One master, I believe, was more or less compelled to leave the school because he had hit a particularly impertinent boy with a book, and several instances of masters receiving reprimands occurred from time to time. By the irony of fate, the most unsuccessful masters were sometimes the cleverest men, who, however, had begun badly and obtained a reputation which caused them to be tortured by successive generations of boys. Of one of these unfortunate pedagogues it was said that during school hours the first rank of his division talked, the second whistled, and the third sang.

One of the most ludicrous jokes ever perpetrated upon any Eton master was played some ten years ago. At that time several new masters, not all of whom were Etonians, had been appointed, more or less, I believe, upon probation. One of these, who taught modern languages, though a clever man, was of too confiding and gentle a disposition to cope with the boys, and during school hours a scene of great disorder became the almost invariable rule. Paper darts flew all over the class-room, and every kind of queer noise was heard, though the poor man was always unable to bring the offenders to book. Finally, on the 5th of November a regular pandemonium prevailed, fireworks being

exploded in all directions, even under his very nose, with the result that he was driven into a state of rage merging upon despair and determined to adopt stringent measures. On the next occasion, however, when the same set of boys came to take their lesson in the language of Molière, what was his surprise to observe that, contrary to all his former Eton experiences, the greatest decorum prevailed, his remarks and comments being listened to in respectful silence, whilst occasionally subdued murmurs of admiration greeted the expounding of some difficult sentence. At the end of that school it had been his intention to address a few words to the boys referring to the scandalous scene of the previous week, but in face of their changed attitude he felt that it would be churlish to show any undue severity, and merely spoke in a tone of surprised regret, adding that he was much pleased to observe such improved behaviour. Upon this a boy, who on previous occasions had been one of the worst offenders, stepping forward, enquired, "Sir, may I say a few words?" Permission being accorded, the youth made a stately little speech, in which he said that any outbursts of indiscipline were deeply deplored by the whole division, for whom he had been deputed to speak. "They were merely," added he, "playful ebullitions—proofs, he might add, of the great popularity of a master whom they all respected and loved. The fact was, his friends had been carried away by enthusiasm, which in future would be

kept within due bounds, and now he hoped the whole incident might be forgiven and forgotten. Meanwhile he had been requested to crave a favour, the granting of which he felt sure no one acquainted with Eton tradition would care to refuse. It was," he continued, "an ancient custom of the school, when a master attained to an unusual degree of popularity, for his division to be allowed the honour of hoisting him, and that honour he and his friends now sought from their beloved pedagogue." The master, though rather surprised, felt very much flattered and pleased at having, as he said in a neat little speech of reply, so quickly gained the confidence and love of his young friends, and at the end of school was carried round the new schools, finally being deposited upon the cannon which all Etonians know so well. As his delighted boys went off to their houses they gave him a final cheer, which filled him with joy. On his way home he met one of the older masters and told him of the demonstration, adding, "Oh, I do so adore your quaint customs!" The astounded old Etonian held his peace, but at the end of that half the newcomer had to betake himself elsewhere, it being clear that the Eton boys were too much for him.

The old lawless spirit which had prompted so many poaching expeditions and illicit rambles in the eighteenth century still lingered in the writer's day, when six or seven boys established a regular club, where they could smoke and play nap, in a

room over a Windsor toy-shop. One of the chief organisers—now a Peer who has filled several important public appointments—always took care to provide a rope-ladder by which the party might escape in the event of a raid. Some of the Windsor billiard-rooms were also occasionally frequented by a few older boys, some of whom had a regular arrangement which ensured them the exclusive use of the table on certain days of the week. As far as the present writer's experience went, no serious harm resulted from these sternly prohibited escapades. Nevertheless, afternoons passed in the consumption of much tobacco and some alcohol did no good to health. The authorities, whenever any rumour of such breaches of the school discipline reached their ears, did everything in their power to set matters right. The wonder was, considering how alert were some of the masters, that more of the culprits were not caught. The writer remembers three—one of whom was his friend Mr. Douglas Ainslie, now a well-known poet and critic—who had a very narrow escape indeed. On such afternoons as they indulged in surreptitious visits to a certain hostelry, these boys used to get into their house after Lock-Up through the room of a small fag, who received careful instructions to look out for their return behind the drawn blind of his window, by which access could be contrived from the street. The signal agreed upon was a pebble thrown gently at the glass. For a time this arrangement worked

well enough, but one winter's evening the party, on reaching their house, were dismayed at obtaining no response. One of them—in after life a gallant officer of Highlanders who fell fighting at the head of his men in South Africa—by climbing up and breaking a pane of glass, managed to effect an entrance; his companions followed, and what was their surprise on relighting the light, which had fallen over in the scuffle, to find, cowering in the corner of the room, a beautiful little girl, who was fairly frightened to death! When at last reassured, this child explained that she was the sister of the owner of the room, who had gone out to borrow some tea-things from a friend. Needless to say, under such circumstances, the Lower boy got no hiding for his delinquency.

In addition to his traditional duties, a master, it seems, now has to mark in the boys in his class-room. Formerly this was done by a prae-postor, one being attached to every division. His office dated from the foundation of the school, when he appears to have possessed considerable authority, being indeed a sort of monitor. In modern times, however, prae-postors merely had to mark in all the boys in the division to which they were attached under three heads, "Leave," "Staying out," and "ab horâ" or "Late." After every school all the prae-postors assembled in the colonnade and handed in their bills to the Headmaster. As a rule the office of

praepostor, undertaken by every boy in turn, was popular, for such an official escaped most of the school hours, was never put on to construe, and passed a good deal of his time chatting to boys reported sick, whom he had to go and see. Some boys disliked it, however, and by arrangement passed the praepostor's book on. The whole institution was a curious survival of a past age. Well does the present writer remember standing as praepostor by the side of Dr. Hornby calling Absence in the school-yard and thinking that the ancient office would not last very much longer. Within recent years his forebodings have been justified, for at present but one praepostor (of the Headmaster's division) exists, the work of marking in being undertaken by masters in school and the boys at the end of the benches in Chapel.

Thirty or forty years ago life in an Eton house remained much as it had been in the eighteenth century, the boys, provided they did their work, being left pretty much to themselves, though some housemasters interfered to prevent boisterous sports, such as football in the passages. The rooms, though often very small, were, it must be said, not uncomfortable, and quite a number of boys prided themselves upon their taste in decoration. Some even had pianos in their rooms, a privilege which was highly valued and seldom abused. The furniture of the rooms generally varied but little. For the most part it consisted of a shut-up bed, a "burry" (bureau) washstand,

which also closed up, and sock cupboard. In this the owner kept his tea-things and such delicacies as he could afford. A favourite form of decoration was a mantel-board covered, according to Victorian taste, with stamped plush and brass-headed nails. In the summer term there was some competition in the matter of fire-ornaments and flower-boxes. The former were generally appalling in their vulgarity, their main feature being a profusion of extremely garish ornament, mostly tinsel and sham gold. Almost every boy had a few pictures, generally of a sporting kind, even though he himself had never taken part in sport. The Eton print shops must have done a fine trade in oleographs and poorly reproduced representations of famous runs and steeplechases. Some few brought comparatively good pictures with them from home. The writer remembers a set of Eton prints in a boy's room which at the present day it would be extremely difficult to procure at all. The books were, of course, mostly connected with work, a crib or two being generally hidden away in case of a raid. On the whole an Eton boy was extremely comfortable, for he could have pretty well anything he or his parents could afford to pay for, while there was scarcely one who did not boast an arm-chair.

On the whole, the long-suffering boys' maids, as they were called, did their work very well. As a rule, it should be added, they were middle-aged women, not remarkable for beauty. One house-

master, indeed—Mr. Walter Durnford, formerly a popular figure at Eton, and now Vice-Provost of King's—according to current report, used, with perfect justice, to pride himself upon the extreme ugliness of his maids. Be this as it may, the boys of his house, which was next to the writer's, were often to be seen peering through their windows in order to catch a glimpse of one of our maids, of whose good looks we were quite justly proud.

Fagging, though probably more arduous than to-day, entailed little hardships on the smaller boys. Thirty years ago a fag's duties consisted in laying his fagmaster's breakfast, procuring chops, steaks, kidneys, or sausages from a sock shop, making toast, and poaching eggs. He had to attend at tea-time again, but then as a rule was not called upon to do anything in particular, his appearance at that hour being more or less a matter of form. Besides this, a fag had to carry notes and render other similar services when required to do so, while obliged to answer to the call of "Lower boy" shouted by any one in Upper Division. It should be added that the qualification as to place in the school entitling boys to fag has gradually been heightened. Formerly the whole of the Fifth Form could fag; but about three decades ago that privilege was withdrawn from the Lower Division, and I believe the number of fagmasters has been further lessened since then. This was not on account of the privilege of fagging having been abused, but merely because the number of Upper

boys had grown too large in proportion with those of the Lower. With the institution of breakfasts provided by housemasters and eaten by the boys all together, fagging has shrunk to a mere nothing. The most irksome part formerly was being obliged to answer the call of "Lower boy," when every one "fagable" was obliged to rush at headlong speed to the caller, the last to arrive being the one who had to perform the particular service required. In College, I believe, "Here" was called instead of "Lower boy." Also, at one time, it would appear that any boy able to call out "Finge" before the rest could claim exemption from taking notice of the call. I must, however, add that I never heard anything about this when I was at Eton. Another College shout was "Cloister P!" on hearing which the lowest boy within call had to fetch a canful of excellent drinking water from the famous old pump in the Cloisters, at the spout of which, in a rougher age, many generations of Collegers had performed their ablutions. Owing to the dearth of Lower boys in College for a long time past, it has been the custom that every new-comer, irrespective of his place in the school, should fag for a year.

In the distant past cricket fagging existed, and must have pressed very heavily upon small boys, who were liable to be waylaid by Fifth Form boys coming out of school. Cricket fagging then included bowling, and was an irksome infliction which was just as well done away with. Another

disagreeable form of fagging which has now long been extinct was crib fagging, which consisted in a small boy being obliged to read out a crib to an assemblage of big ones. As a rule, on these occasions another fag would be posted in the passage outside in order to give time for the crib to be secreted should there be any chance of the tutor making his unwelcome appearance. Towing boats up to Surly was the most severe form of fagging. This was abolished by Keate some eighty years ago.

It is much to the credit of the Eton system that amongst the Oppidans (the state of affairs in old Long Chamber was different) there seems never to have existed any bullying. During the investigations of the Commission in 1861 all the evidence tended to show that small boys underwent no ill-treatment or persecution whatever. In the writer's opinion this in a great measure accounts for the independent and buoyant spirit which has ever been a characteristic of Etonians in after life. Many sensitive boys educated at schools where bullying has prevailed have felt the results of it in a tamed and often broken spirit.

One of the peculiarities of Eton in old days was that unless a boy supplemented his dietary by the purchase of provisions from the shops in the town he would often have to go hungry, and even thirty years ago in most of the houses the old Eton traditions as regards feeding were in full force. All the boys received was a loaf, pat of butter, and pot of tea for breakfast. Luncheon they all

had together with their dame in the large dining-room; this was a fairly substantial meal. Tea taken in their own rooms exactly resembled breakfast, besides which there was a very light supper in the dining-room, at which attendance was optional. Almost without exception, of course, this somewhat meagre fare was supplemented by the boys themselves, who purchased appetising dishes from the sock shops at a reasonable price. An Eton custom at that day, which probably still exists, was for the boys to have what were called "orders" at one of these shops. This "order" consisted in an agreement with a shopkeeper to supply a boy with provisions to a certain amount every day, the boy's father or mother having previously paid a sum in advance. The arrangement was, of course, intended to prevent the boy from finding himself bereft of all luxuries after the pocket-money given him when he left home had been exhausted; but, as a matter of fact, in the case of the more extravagant boys it almost invariably missed its mark, for, getting round the shopkeeper, they would persuade him to allow the anticipation of their "order," with the result that whilst during the first fortnight of the half they revelled in every sort of delicacy, their breakfasts and teas during the remainder of the school time were unenlivened by any toothsome dishes. The most popular sock shops were then Harry Webber's (now Rowland's) and "little Brown's," the door of which the writer, on a recent visit to Eton, found shut.

The system of "orders" extended to other things besides sock shops, a dame or housemaster having the power of giving them for clothes or any other necessary. A boy applying for one of these signed permits was supposed to be able to prove that he was really in want of the article he wished to procure, and, the order being handed to him, was recognised by a tradesman as a valid voucher that the sum for which it stood would be included in the boy's bill at the end of the half. On the whole this arrangement worked well, but occasionally unscrupulous boys, by arrangement with some not over particular tradesman, would obtain some other article which was really anything but a necessary.

Dames were sometimes easy about granting "orders," and not a few boys prided themselves upon their adroitness in obtaining anything they liked, and some of them managed to run up comparatively large accounts with their housemaster's or dame's permission. An even more extravagant and reckless kind of boy would contrive to persuade some tradesman (generally a London one who knew something about the circumstances of his parents) to allow him to run up bills without any "order" at all, the understanding being that these should be paid when the boy had left school or came of age. One such case the writer well remembers, the perpetrator being a very dissipated youth celebrated throughout the school for always being in trouble with the authorities. This boy was a great dandy as regards dress,

and it was currently reported that he never wore the same pair of trousers twice. This, of course, was an exaggeration, but he certainly had a wonderful stock of clothes. On leaving Eton he had accumulated debts to a considerable figure, and his after career was anything but a success, for after attempting various forms of occupation, including amateur newspaper reporting, he was last heard of keeping a little store in South Africa. An account of the curious professions adopted by Eton boys would fill a volume. On the whole, however, the majority do well, as, after all, is only to be expected, considering that in the first instance their parents must have been possessed of considerable funds in order to send them to Eton at all.

Some tutors, unable to keep order in their houses, were the victims of all sorts of unpleasant jokes. One of the most mischievous and dangerous of these was to stretch a string across a passage and then set to work to create such a noise as would be sure to attract the tutor's attention, with the result that when he arrived upon the scene he would be tripped up. Another diversion of a somewhat similar sort was to pile a number of iron coal-scuttles just at the top of a flight of stairs, and, after creating a great din, kick them down upon the ascending tutor, who would seldom be able to discover the organiser of the outrage. A more amusing trick was the following. A small Lower boy, having, with his own consent, been tied up in

one of the huge dirty linen bags, was placed in the middle of a passage and told to keep perfectly motionless till he felt a slight kick, when he was to rise at his assailant and hold on to his legs, calling out the name of some big boy well known to all. This being done, all the occupants of the passage would set to work to make sufficient noise to produce their tutor's appearance, upon which complete silence would prevail. Nine times out of ten the tutor, walking down the passage to ascertain the reason of the disturbance, seeing the dirty linen bag, would try and kick it on one side, with the result that, rising at him, it would clutch him by the leg and cause him to execute a multitude of undignified gyrations, to the delight of boys peeping through doors just ajar. When, finally, the small boy had been extricated from the bag, it was very difficult to punish him, for he would invariably plead that he had been tied up against his will, and in pinching his assailant's legs had been merely acting in self-defence against some one whom he had good reason to suspect was a persecuting school-fellow.

Throwing bits of coal out of the window at passers-by or shooting with a catapult used to be favourite pastimes with boys of a past age. Fierce battles were sometimes waged in the winter evenings between the boys in adjacent houses, when they would bombard each other with pea-shooters or squirts charged with ink or water. Occasionally this warfare involved onlookers in the street below.

The writer remembers a great disturbance caused by an angry policeman whose helmet and uniform had been liberally bespattered with ink.

Some of the houses contained broad and lengthy passages, on each side of which were ranged boys' rooms, a favourite amusement for the occupants of which was standing by the open doors and awaiting the cry of "Slough; change here for Staines, Windsor, Datchet," when every boy would slam his door in turn down the passage with a view to produce the effect of a train about to start. Immediately after the completion of this manoeuvre the boys would at once fly to their "burries" (bureaus), at which they would be found hard at work when the infuriated tutor or housemaster arrived to discover the cause of the disturbance. In some cases the unfortunate man would ignore the first performance of this ingenious form of torture, but a second and louder slamming seldom failed to bring him in hot haste from his private quarters. To punish for this kind of thing was exceedingly difficult, for the boys were, of course, at liberty to shut their doors, and collusion was not easy to prove.

A number of boys spent their time experimenting with electricity and chemicals, and the writer well remembers a friend having his face severely injured by the explosion of some dangerous compound mixed together in a flower-box. On another occasion the same boy (now a well-known sporting peer) occasioned a serious panic.

Having inserted some detonating composition amongst the bricks of the railway arches over which trains run into Windsor, he contrived to make it explode just before the Royal train bearing Queen Victoria passed. It was a time when Ireland was in a very disturbed state, and there was much dread of some outrage. Consequently the Windsor and Eton police were convinced that the explosion had a political origin, and every effort was made by means of detectives to find the perpetrator. It was, however, never discovered that he was an Eton boy.

About thirty years ago, Eton boys were seized with a craze for hoaxing the London Press, and some extraordinary letters appeared in various papers. The most extraordinary of all was one bearing the signature of an Eton master which described the writer's remarkable experiences in the country, where he had witnessed a conflict between a cow and a partridge, in which the cow, after a prolonged chase, had eventually captured and devoured the bird. The master eventually wrote an indignant denial, but he was never able to discover who had taken his name in vain.

The greatest practical joke ever played at Eton was the colossal hoax perpetrated in the early eighties of the last century upon the somewhat ingenuous editor of a newly-started London magazine, who had been struck with the idea of increasing its attractions by publishing authentic news of public-school life. Not unnaturally he began with

Eton, and, setting to work to secure contributors at that school, obtained some really astounding information, which afterwards went to the making of an extremely scarce little book called *Eton as She is not*. More recently an amusing account of the whole affair appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* at the end of an excellent article on "College at Eton." At first the editor's correspondents merely furnished him with accounts of local events, all of them pure invention; but, emboldened by success, they soon went on to describe some interesting old customs. The first was chronicled thus:—

A curious custom takes place here on certain days in College Dining Hall, called "Passing the Green Stuff." The second fellow at the big fellows' table suddenly says, "Pass me that Green Stuff," referring to a dish of mint placed on the table; then the fellow opposite him stands up, and says "Surgite" (arise), on which all the other fellows get up from their places and run the fellow who "broached" (*i.e.* asked for) the green stuff round the School Paddocks, shouting out such military commands as "Quick march! Right turn!" etc. They then return to dinner, when a "grace-cup" is partaken by all except him who "broached" the green stuff.

In the next number readers were informed that at Eton Prisoner's Base is a great success, and the Paddock is almost always deserted for the Cloisters. The following then appeared:—

Another curious custom at Eton is "Slunching the Paddocks." On a certain day all the Collegians and Oppidans are provided with a coarse sort of pudding, which is put to the following use. After dinner is over they all go to Weston's and School Paddocks and throw their pudding

all over them. This is "Slunching the Paddocks," the pudding being called "Slunch." It is supposed to be derived from the fact that when Queen Elizabeth visited Eton College "she lunched" (s'lunched) in College Hall, and the students sprinkled the paddocks with dry rice in her honour.

In the number published on March 5, 1884, a purely imaginary list of the officials of the various school departments was given. There were the Captains of the "Broach" and the "Slunch," the two College boats; the Captain of Cricket Tassels, R. J. Lucas;¹ Captain of Fives Tassels, Havager Boroughdale; Captain of the Musical Department, R. A. S. Berry-Young; Captain of the Curling Club, T. T. Vator; Captain of the Spelican Team, Tute Goodhart; Captain of Ushers, J. Goodwin; Steward of the Paddocks, H. Beecham Wolley; Choragus, C. Woffington. This was followed in the next number by the news that the Spelican team had played their first match of the season on March 11 against the Dorney Dubes. The Collegian Brigade, an admirable corps, which marched out as far as Brocas Hedges, was later on described as having met with a catastrophe, for "a bull loose in Weston's Paddock, which they passed through on the way, attacked the line, and a boy named Swage was knocked over and slightly bruised."

This went on for six months, when the Editor

¹ Captain of the eleven 1883-1884, Unionist member for Portsmouth 1900-1906. In more recent years Mr. Lucas has become known to many as a writer with a particularly pleasant style, who is also possessed of a gift for delicate versification.

wrote and expressed a desire to come down to Eton and see the place for himself. He was duly shown a hockey match between B. Wolley's "Field Mice" and Flenderbatch's "Jolly Boys," the match being played with tassels on the caps and all, which so impressed him that he returned to London and wrote an account of what he had seen, giving at the same time a new and original version of the School Song, addressed to "Pulcra Etona" and praying among other things that :

Slunna fluat,
Semper ruat
Capti fundamentum.

"Slunna" is slunch, "capti fundamentum" is sound Latin for prisoner's base. In high good temper he added that "our Eton correspondence is supplied by a gentleman who is a universal favourite in College, and the Editor is pleased to state that he has received letters from Etonians all over the world, signifying their approval of his reports." He was disillusioned soon after, and no more space was devoted to Eton and the strange doings of its students.

Though at that time something of the old-world spirit still lingered, there survived few of the quaint "characters" who had once been fairly numerous at Eton. The ever-gentle, suave, and urbane Giles of Williams' (afterwards Ingaltton Drake's, and now Spottiswoode's) will, however, be remembered by many. How this good-natured man managed to book the orders at the beginning of a school-time

and keep his temper is a mystery which will never be solved. He had, I remember, a red-headed assistant, who, though a shade more inclined to frivolity than Giles (who was scholastic gravity itself), seemed to have been born to serve out broad rule and derivation paper without being ever in the least perturbed by the chatter of crowds of Lower boys.

Another grave-looking character of this period was Solomon, who all day long stood in a minute room at the back of Brown's, the hosier, ironing hats. Solomon's appearance and demeanour did not accord ill with his appellation. He was a white-headed old man who always wore a paper cap somewhat resembling the traditional head-dress of a French cook. Standing in his shirt-sleeves gently working his iron over the nap of ill-used "toppers," his favourite topic was the Turf, of which surely no more ardent votary ever lived. All day long he would discuss with the various boys who streamed into his little workroom the chances of the horses entered for the next classic race. Solomon was essentially an old-fashioned turfite in his ideas, and knew nothing of starting-price jobs or other new-fangled manoeuvres. He was, however, acquainted with the form of all the more prominent race-horses, and in his conversation laid gentle stress upon the value of a judgment which no one wished to dispute. In spite of the old man's ardent affection for racing, I cannot help thinking that during his long life he had seldom

seen any races run. On this subject, however, it was best to hold one's peace. Though Solomon's sanctum was the scene of such eternal confabulations as to the great question of first, second, and third, I cannot remember that much betting arose from it. As far as my memory serves me, the majority of Solomon's visitors remained purely academic in their patronage of racing. Perhaps this was owing to the fact that the Lower boys, of whom his ever-changing audience was for the most part composed, had very little money, and preferred to spend what they had in substantial dainties rather than risk it in speculations of a visionary kind. I do not recollect Solomon doing any serious betting for boys, but have a vague idea he occasionally put shillings on. I was therefore surprised when told some years ago that the old man had been driven out of his place owing to the action of the College authorities, who objected to him as demoralising the boys by assisting them to bet. I can only hope that this report was untrue, for in my day, at least, his influence was quite harmless.

In the sixties, I believe, there used to be a school Derby lottery every year, the winner of which generally got about £25. The arrangements for this seem to have been placed in the hands of a well-known character about the "wall" named "Snip," but he had died or disappeared long before my day, and the only lottery I remember was a tiny private affair, the tickets of

which cost sixpence or a shilling. In connection with this subject it is said that of late years betting amongst the boys has become a serious evil. If this is the case, the school must have undergone a considerable change in its ideas within the last quarter of a century. In the late seventies and early eighties there was practically no betting at all amongst the boys, chiefly for the reason just given, but also because there existed a widespread idea that any attempt at speculation would eventually lead to loss of money. A good many boys, no doubt, who had a love for the Turf looked forward to gratifying a taste for speculation in time to come, whilst others told extravagant tales of Turf triumphs during the holidays, but few took racing seriously, their interest being limited to flocking to the post-office to hear the first news as to the winner of any great race. A salient proof that at that date no real betting existed was the sensation caused amongst us by the rumour, based on truth, that a new boy (the son of the Maharajah Duleep Singh, whose arrival at Eton created some sensation), on being spoken to by a member of the eight in the school-yard, had offered to bet him a fiver against a certain horse, which wager had been accepted. This was the largest wager we ever heard of as being made at Eton, and it was looked upon as extraordinary.

On the other side of the High Street, opposite to the establishment where Solomon ironed hats

and gave forth his wisdom, a younger rival also doctored battered "toppers." As far as I can remember, he was a far rougher individual than the racing sage, and possessed a tendency towards familiarity which was not universally popular. He and Solomon both resembled each other in one respect, which was their taste for plastering every available inch of their walls with cuts and paragraphs from cheap papers of a comic order.

A curious character amongst the sock shop-keepers of that period was an old Italian confectioner, who owned rather a spacious shop with very little in it up the High Street, on the right-hand side going from Eton towards Windsor Bridge. This worthy, who was always attired in a cook's dress—white cap, apron, and all—made and sold most excellent ices, which procured him a fair amount of custom from the Eton boys in spite of the fact that his shop was considered rather "scuggish." According to common report, the proprietor had once been employed at Windsor Castle, where his skill as an ice-maker had won the favour of Queen Victoria, with whom for a time he had become a particular favourite. One day, however, the Queen had caught him administering a thundering thrashing to his wife, in consequence of which she had very rightly at once turned him out of his post. This story, though resting upon no credible evidence, was generally believed by Lower boys, and some of them made a practice

of infuriating the old man by hurling taunts at him as they were going out of his shop. "What a pity, 'Cally,' you got kicked out of the Queen's kitchen!" they would call out, and the little Italian never failed to fly into a great rage at their chaff. Indeed, on more than one occasion he was said to have pursued boys into the street with a knife in his hand, but this in all probability was mere exaggeration. Nevertheless he had a violent temper, and for this reason was constantly being drawn by mischievous boys.

A more improving occupation than chaffing tradesmen was reading books and papers at Ingalton Drake's, the bookseller, who afterwards took over Williams', where all the school books were sold. This establishment, owing to the good nature of the proprietor, was constantly thronged with a crowd of boys, who, seldom making any purchase, spent a good deal of time turning over the leaves of new books just fresh from London. The *Times* could also be read there. As a matter of fact, the boys were very careful not to hurt or dirty the books they took up or touched, and I do not think the owner of the establishment had reason to regret his kindness, which was the means of many Etonians acquiring an insight into branches of knowledge which the school curriculum made no attempt to include. Many a pleasant and not uninstructional half-hour was passed here by boys to whom cut-and-dried lessons made no appeal.

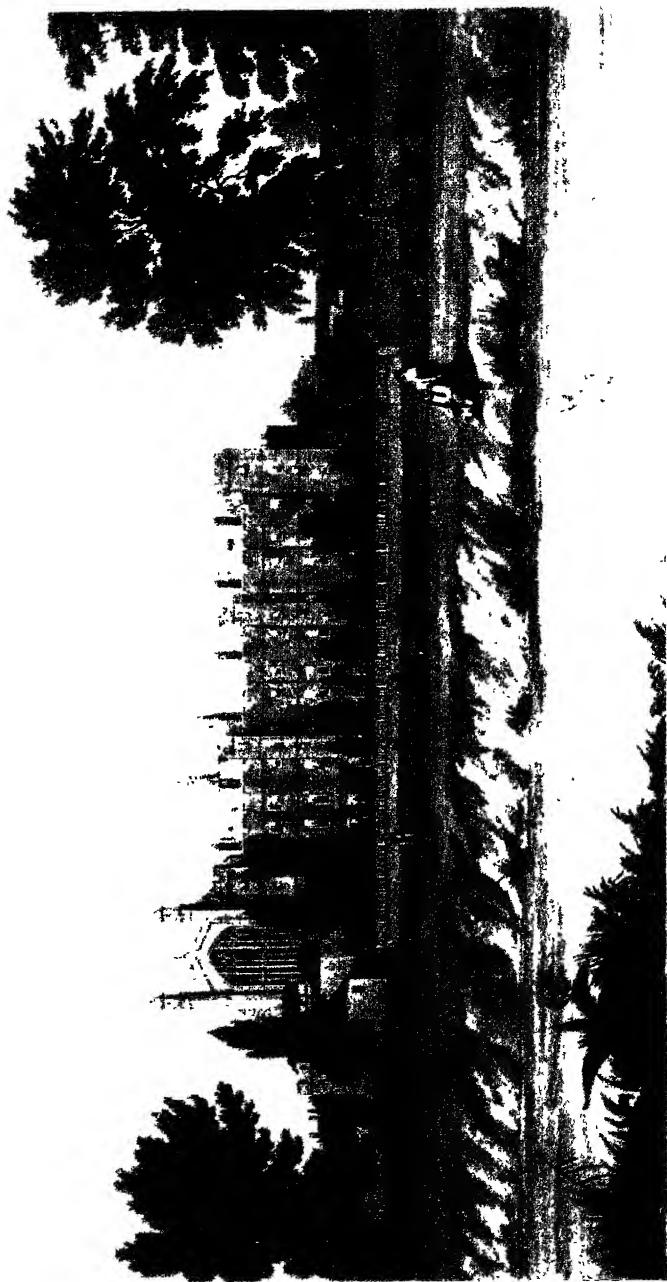
The Eton traditions of three decades ago were not very many in number, most of them being concerned with minor points of dress, things which were to be done and were not to be done, and the like. Except hoisting, few old usages survived, though, no doubt, the opinions of many long-past generations still influenced the boys in their unwritten code of what was "scuggish" and what was not. Hoisting, I believe, still survives, though a very few years ago undue exuberance on the part of the boys nearly caused its abolition. At that time (1904-1905) the whole school would assemble along the wall on the evening of the School Pulling, which always takes place after Lord's, and await the arrival of the members of "Pop," who from Tap would walk arm-in-arm across the whole street to opposite their Club Room in the building of the old Christopher. They would then seize the winners of the School Pulling, and, according to traditional custom, run up and down along the wall with them, the whole school shouting at the top of their voices. If the eleven had won at Lord's, or the eight at Henley, its members were also hoisted one by one. In the case of the School Pulling, the winners, after being hoisted, were taken to some prominent upper window in one of the houses which all could see, and water solemnly poured over their heads, the jugs and crockery being eventually thrown out into the street. This latter generally occurred just before Lock-up, all the boys being still out in the street.

The end was that "Pop" canes were produced, arms linked, and everybody systematically driven into his tutor's house. The ceremony of hoisting was not very popular with the public, for, in consequence of the noise, passing carts and carriages generally went by a good deal quicker than the drivers wished, and horses became alarmed, whilst no bicyclist was allowed to remain on his bicycle, every one who passed being booed or cheered. Thirty years ago the ceremony proceeded much in the same way, though there was more consideration shown to the drivers of horses which looked likely to become alarmed by noise; also the crockery-smashing ceremonial did not exist, and would have been resented had any attempt been made to institute it.

Like another custom of modern origin, "Lock-up Parade," this very undesirable addition to hoisting has now been forbidden. Lock-up Parade, which did not exist in the writer's Eton days, took place in the Summer Half, just before the hour of Lock-up, when the boys walked backwards and forwards within very narrow limits to the strains of musicians stationed outside "Tap."

Tap is, if possible, more flourishing than ever, being, as of old, crowded on summer evenings. At such a time whilst the wet bobs on their way home from the Brocas fill it to overflowing, a number of swagger dry bobs also put in an appearance. In addition to the traditional refreshments procurable at Tap, chops, steaks, bread and cheese, beer and

cider, coffee, chocolate, cakes, fruit, and other good things of the same kind may now be got there, with the result that it is also much frequented after twelve, though, of course, not by Lower boys, who are still excluded as of old. A modern Eton fashion is the giving of a breakfast under a tent in the garden of Tap during the summer term. This is a very "swagger" affair, most of "Pop" putting in an appearance. A few years ago, when some of the members of the Eton Society were more than usually vivacious in disposition, the return from Tap in the evening just before Lock-up was occasionally very noisy, top-hats flying about in all directions, and passers-by finding it difficult to proceed on their way without being playfully held up. At present, however, the summer evenings are once again peaceful as of yore—a happy state of affairs which should delight every true lover of Eton, for it is beneath the rays of a setting sun that the tranquil charm of the old red-brick walls and weather-beaten buildings makes itself especially felt. At this time of year is it, more than any other, that the crowning glory of the place—the playing fields fringed by the silver winding Thames—present such a superb scene of placid beauty, whilst College close by whispers from its towers "the last enchantment of the Middle Age." No wonder that, in spite of altered ways and habits, the spirit fostered by such stately surroundings still remains alive—



Eton College from the River
From an old coloured print

Still the reaches of the river, still the light on field and hill,
Still the memories held aloft as lamps for hope's young fire to fill,
Shine, and while the light of England lives shall shine for
England still.

It is to be hoped that these lines, written by the last great Etonian poet to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the foundation, will be as applicable to the school five hundred years hence as they are to-day. May those yet to come continue to bear the torch of Eton, handed down from distant generations, bravely aloft, whilst never ceasing to keep before their eyes the duty of delivering it to their successors, its flame bright and brilliant as of old.

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